

# COUNTRY LIFE

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COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS

## ILLUSTRATED.

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Photo. by LAFAYETTE,

LADY WOLVERTON.

179, New Bond Street.



IF that long postponed event, the partition of Turkey, ever takes place, shooting in the Levant will probably be as popular as salmon fishing in Norway. The lovely coast of Asia Minor, from the Dardanelles to the Gulf of Ismid, on whose rivers and water-meadows the wildfowl have assembled in their myriads from the days of Homer until now, offers almost perfect shooting among small game, ranging from woodcock, hares, and partridges (mostly of the red-legged variety), to snipe, duck, and wildfowl, autumn and winter through. Further inland there is excellent large game shooting. Sir Samuel Baker, for example, had capital sport in the woods under the Mysian Olympus with deer and wild boars; but as brigands are not extinct—they recently captured and held to ransom an English gentleman close to Smyrna—far inland sport must be avoided at present.

The most interesting "shoot" of old Ionia is that round the ancient Ephesus itself. Here, in one of the finest climates and among the most beautiful scenery of the old world, the whole of the plain, the marsh, and the hill of Coressus, on which stood the ancient city, is given up to birds, hares, and foxes. The banks of the Cayster and its meadows absolutely swarm with ducks, cranes, various herons, teal, widgeon, storks, and water-hen, of which the cranes go off to Ethiopia, as they did in the days of the Iliad, but the rest remain through autumn and winter and yield tribute to the gun. Homer does not mention the woodcock, but these abound from October to February; and hares, the favourite animal of Diana, for killing which Eschylus declares that she hated the eagles, abound on the rocky slopes above the fragments of her temple. Thousands of hares are shot annually by native gunners for the sake of their skins, which are made into bales and exported from Smyrna. The temple itself was built upon a marsh, and supported on a foundation of sheep-skins, or wool-packs, that the earthquakes might not overthrow it. That marsh now swarms with snipe and jack snipe. Moreover, the old harbour and course of the Cayster are silted up, so that thousands of acres of fresh marsh are added, in which an average day's sport will give a hundred shots at snipe. On a pool in these marshes a native gunner, or *yiourouk*,



IN THE TEMPLE OF DIANA.

killed eleven duck at a shot with his single-barrelled gun last winter. Some parts of the flat are cultivated with beans, corn, and pulse crops. But the best sport is had on the rocky hill-sides and on the rough, uncultivated, waterless parts of the plain at their foot. IN THE TEMPLE OF DIANA is no bad place to lunch, and whether the bag is to contain more hares and red-legged partridges, or woodcock, snipe, and duck, depends only on the choice of ground made by the party.

Our illustrations give some idea both of the ground and of the way in which English notions of sport have "caught on" in the Levant. Both hares and woodcock are shot over pointers, and these are regularly bred for the work by Greek sportsmen, and not spoiled even by the red-legged partridges.

The native-bred pointer whose portrait we give was broken not only to find cock and hares, but to retrieve them. He would point a hare at one moment, retrieve it when shot, and the next minute would stand a woodcock. RETRIEVING WOODCOCK was one of his strongest points. Some of the pleasantest days' mixed shooting are in October, when the first frost has set in. The hares then leave the neighbourhood of the vineyards and melon fields, and lie out on the plains or mountain slopes, among the rocks and heather. HARE SHOOTING ON THE PLAIN OF EPHEBUS would make a good enough day's sport by itself, but the woodcock come in as part of the regular increment of every hour's walking. Usually they lie close and fly low, like cock on an Irish moor on the West Coast. BAGGING A COCK is, however, less easy in the scrubby woods under the hills which form the coverts, usually beaten when woodcock are the first object of the day. This scene is, we think, quite unique, and gives a very lifelike presentation of this wild Levantine shooting.

Woodcock shooting is, on the whole, the cream of the Levantine sport. Whether at Besika Bay, or round Smyrna, or up the little Smyrna-Aidin railway, or at Ephesus, cocks abound throughout the autumn and the winter. They feed in the marshes, but are found everywhere by day, mainly in covert of scrub-juniper,



HARE SHOOTING AT EPHEBUS.



which grows among the scattered rocks and uncultivated ground. There are also thick woods of dwarf pine, which are often full of cock. In snowy weather as many as fifty cock have been killed in two hours by a single gun near Vourlah Bay.

At Besika Bay, further north, excellent sport may be had on the plains of Troy, both with woodcock, hares, and partridges; 230 woodcock were killed in one day by a party of ten guns from



BAGGING A COCK.

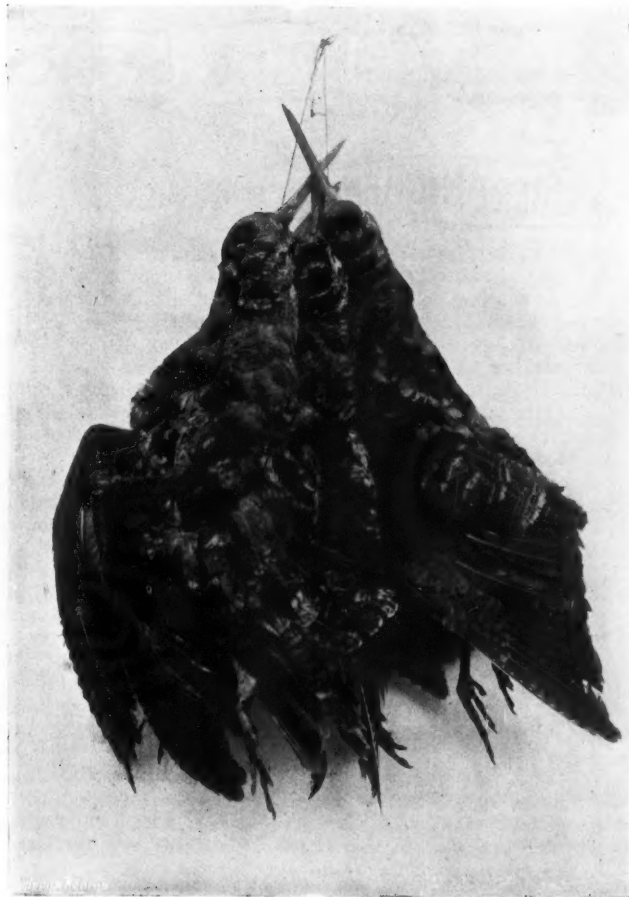
the British fleet some years ago, all shot in juniper scrub. There is also a marsh two miles long, formed by the silting up of Simois' and Scamander, the rivers of old Troy, where good snipe shooting and some duck may generally be found. On the island of Tenedos, opposite Besika Bay, good partridge shooting, of both grey and red legs, can be had; and on Long Island, near Smyrna, there are any quantity of red-legs, though as the ground consists largely of flat rocks the birds commonly run and rise wild.

The habits of the red-legged partridges in this district are somewhat curious. They are thorough mountain birds, and one often feels that David's complaint that he had been hunted like a partridge on the mountains implies more than it seems to. If the partridges of Palestine were as agile as those of Asia Minor—and they are of the same species—David's pursuers must have had some weary days when on the chase.

There is little doubt that if a kite were used the birds would



RETRIEVING WOODCOCK.



A LEASH OF DEAD WOODCOCK.

lie and large bags could be made. But as a rule they keep on the most open ground, and run up the steep slopes with the agility of goats.

The best means of making a bag is to divide the party and shoot on opposite sides of a ridge, or from converging points on the plain. Once get the birds tired and well scattered, every head of a covey may be bagged, as they then lie close, and bounce up like grouse out of the juniper bushes. The natives kill these birds in two ingenious but unsportsmanlike ways. One method used is to paint a screen of canvas in very light colours, usually circles of red, blue, and yellow, and to set this up near some place where the birds come to drink in the early morning. They are at once attracted by the screen, and in a few minutes the whole covey come running up to look at it. The native pot-hunter sits behind with his gun barrel poked through a hole in the centre of the screen, and when he has got as many in a row as he thinks he can manage he pulls the trigger and "browns" the covey. Another plan is to have a tame cock partridge and set him in a cage near the water. He calls incessantly, and the other cock birds near fly up to fight him, when they are potted by the hidden gun.

Hare shooting of a rather deadly kind is also practised in the early morning and at dusk, as regularly as "flight shooting" is part of the morning and evening duty of shore gunners. The hares come in from all the hillsides at dusk to feed on the patches of cultivated ground. For this they use regular paths, running between the rocks and boulders. Seven or eight hares may be bagged in one evening by watching these paths, and as many more at sunrise when the hares are leaving the vineyards for the hills. We believe this is the only part of the world where the professional hare shooter exists—evidence, if any were needed, of the numbers of the hares.

One of the most agreeable forms of sport in Ionia is to form a party at Smyrna, and charter a good steam launch with a pilot who knows the coast. If the sportsman has a turn for antiquarianism he will derive added pleasure from these excursions, for the whole coast is studded with the remains of a civilisation famous from the days of Herodotus to those of the Crusaders.

The launch serves as headquarters, dining and sleeping room, and is far the handiest means of locomotion; for the roads of Asia Minor, even near the larger towns, are only fit for native horses to travel on. Near Smyrna the best and most accessible snipe grounds are the marshes of Djelat, Mermer Göl, Prianda, and Kaías; but there is little doubt that when European sportsmen are able to explore the country more thoroughly even better marshes will be found, and coverts more prolific in woodcock than those by the Temple of Diana.

C. J. CORNISH.



A FEW days later Maurice stood at the garden gate and helped Lily into the carriage that was to take her to the station. A summons to a patient prevented him from seeing her and the Canon off on their journey Northwards. Just before Lily put her foot on the step she stopped and wavered.

"Wait a moment," she said.

She ran back into the little house which had been her home since she was married. Maurice supposed that she had forgotten something. But she only peeped into her bedroom, into the gay drawing-room, into Maurice's den. And as she looked at this last little chamber, at the books, the ruffled writing-table, the pipes ranged against the wall, her photograph standing in a silver frame upon the mantel-piece, her eyes filled with tears, and there was a stricken feeling at her heart.

"Lily, you will miss the train," Maurice called to her.

She hurried out, got into the carriage, and was driven away, wondering why she had gone back to take a last glance at her home, why she had scarcely been able to see it for her tears.

That evening Maurice returned from his round of visits in a curious state of excitement and of anticipation mingled with nervous dread. He felt as if the eyes of the dead child were upon all his doings, as if the mind of the dead child pondered every act of his, as if the brain of the dead child were busy about his life, as if the soul of the dead child concerned itself for ever with his soul, which it had secretly dedicated to a loneliness assured now by the departure of Lily. By living alone, even for a few weeks, was he not in a measure obeying the desire of the little spirit, which possessed his fate like some inexorable providence? If so, dare he not hope for an interval of peace, for that stillness after which he longed with an anxiety that was like a physical pain?

He entered his house. Twilight was falling, and the hall, in which on the previous night the child had complained in so sinister a manner, was shadowy. He stood there and listened. He heard the distant wash of the sea, the voices of two servants talking together behind the swing door that led to the kitchen. No sound mingled with the sea or with the chattering voices. Slowly he ascended the stairs and entered the bedroom in which Lily had slept quietly while he, by her side, endured the persecution of the child. The blinds were up. The dying daylight crept slowly from the room, making an exit as furtive and suppressed as that of one who steals from a death chamber. Maurice sat down upon the bed and again listened for a long time.

He was conscious of the sense of relief which comes upon a man who, through some sudden act, has removed from his shoulders a terrible burden. He took this present silence to himself as a reward. But would it last? Opening the window, he leaned out to hear the sea more plainly. All living voices, whether of Nature or of man, were beautiful to him; they had come to make his silence.

A servant knocked at the door. Maurice went down to dine. He passed the late evening, as usual, in his study. He slept calmly; he woke—to silence. Did not this silence confirm his fixed idea that his marriage with Lily had vexed that wakeful spirit, had troubled that unquiet soul of the child? Maurice, wrapped in a beautiful peace, felt that it did; and, as the silent lovely days, the silent lovely nights passed on, he came gradually to a fixed resolve.

Lily must not return to him, must not live with him again.

He pondered for a long time how he was to compass their further separation. And, at length, he sat down and wrote a letter to Lily telling her the exact truth.

"Think me cruel, selfish," he wrote at the end of his letter. "I am cruel, I am selfish. Despair has made me so; the fear of madness has made me so. I must have peace. I must and will have it at whatever cost."

He sent this letter to the *poste restante* at Windermere, as Lily had directed. She and her father were moving about in the Lake district, and did not know from day to day where they might be. He received a reply within a week. It reached him at breakfast time, and, happening to glance at the post-mark before he opened it, his face suddenly flushed and his heart beat with violence. For the letter came from that lonely village in that sequestered mountain valley in which he had once lived, in

which he had first heard the cry of the child. What chance had led Lily's steps there? Maurice read the letter eagerly.

It was very gentle, very submissive; and there was one strange passage in it:

"I understand that you are at peace," Lily wrote. "Yet the child is not at peace. It is crying still. You will ask me how I know that. Do not ask me now. Some day I shall send for you and tell you. When I send for you, if it is by day or night, promise that you will come to me. I claim this promise from you. And now good-bye for a time. My father is very unhappy about us. But he trusts me completely, and I have told him that you and I must be apart, but only for a time. I shall not write to you again till I send for you. Even my letter may disturb your peace, and I would give up my life to give you peace."

There was no allusion in the letter to the reason which had led Lily and her father to the out of the way valley which had seen the dawn of Maurice's despair. And Maurice was greatly puzzled. Again there came over him a curious conviction that Lily had some secret from him, some secret connected with his fate, and that she was waiting for the arrival of some day, fixed in her mind, on which to make a revelation of her knowledge to him. This mention of an eventual summons "by day or night." What could it mean otherwise? Maurice read the letter again and again. Its last words touched him by their perfect unselfishness and also by their feminine romance. He had a moment's thought of the many emotional stories Lily had read. "She lives in one now," he said to himself. And then, as usual, he became self-engrossed, saw only his own life, possibly touched for ever with a light of peace.

The Canon returned alone. He met Maurice gravely, almost sternly.

"I trust my child entirely," he said. "She has told me that for a time you must live apart. She has made me promise not to ask you the reason of this separation. I don't ask it, but if you—"

His voice broke, and he turned away for a moment. Then he said:

"Lily remains in the place from which she wrote to you."

"She is going to live there!" Maurice exclaimed.

"For the present I could not persuade her otherwise. Her old nurse, Mrs. Whitehead, is going up to be with her. I cannot understand all this."

The old man cast his eyes searchingly upon Maurice.

"What —?" he began; then, remembering his promise to his daughter, he stopped short.

"We will talk no more about this," he said slowly. "No more."

He bade Maurice good-bye, and returned, sorrowful, to the Rectory.

Lily kept her word. Maurice had no more letters from her. He only heard of her from the Canon, and knew that she remained in that beautiful and terrible valley which he remembered so vividly and hated so ardently. Meanwhile he dwelt in a peace that was strange to him. The little voice had gone out of his life. The cry of the child was hushed. Often in the past Maurice had contemplated the coming of this exquisite silence, but he had always imagined it as a gradual approach. He had fancied that if the lamentation of the child ever died out of his haunted life, it would fade away as the sound of the sea fades on a long strand when the whispering tide goes down.

Day by day, night by night, the crying would grow less poignant, less distinct in a long diminuendo, as if the restless spirit withdrew slowly farther and farther away, till the cry became a whisper, then a broken murmur, then—nothing. This abrupt cessation of persecution, this violent change from something that had seemed like menace to perfect immunity from trouble, was a fact that Maurice had never thought of as a possibility. He had grown to believe that Lily's presence in his home intensified the terror from which he suffered, certainly, but he had never supposed that her removal from him would lay the spirit entirely to rest. And she said that it was not at rest. How could she know that? And if it were not at rest, in what region was it pursuing its weird activity? Whither had it gone? He wondered long and deeply. And then he resolved



to wonder no more. Peace had come to him at last; he could not break it by questioning the reason of it. He would accept it blindly, joyfully. Man blots the sunshine out of life by asking "Why?"

Time passed on. Brayfield had gossiped, marvelled, and sunk into a sort of apathy of unrewarded and quiescent curiosity. The Canon pursued his life at the Rectory. Maurice visited his patients and continued unremittingly his medical researches. The immunity he now enjoyed gradually wrought a great change in him. He emerged from prison into the outer air. His health rapidly improved. His heavy eyes grew bright. His mind was active and alert. He was a new man. The darkness lifted round him. He saw the light at last, for the silence endured. And at last he even forgot to listen, at dawn or in the silent hours of the night, for the cry of the child. Even the memory of it began to grow faint within his heart. So rapidly does man forget his troubles when he still has youth and the years are not heavy on him.

Yet Maurice often thought of Lily. And now that he was no longer bowed under the tyranny of a shattered nervous system, he felt a new tenderness for her. He recalled her devotion, and no longer linked her with his persecution. He remembered her unselfishness. He wished her back again. And then—he remembered all his misery, and that, with her, it went. And his selfishness said to him—it is better so. And his mental cowardice whispered to him—your safety is in your solitude. And he put the memory of Lily's love and of the beauty of her nature from him.

So his silent autumn passed by, and his silent winter

came. One day, in a December frost, he met the Canon, muffled up to the chin and on his way to see Miss Bigelow, who professed herself once again *in extremis*. They stopped in the snow and spoke a few common-place words, but Maurice thought he observed a peculiar furtiveness in the old man's manner, a hint of some suppressed excitement in his voice.

"How is Lily?" Maurice asked.

"Fairly well," the Canon said.

"She is still at the Inn?"

"No, she lately moved into a little house further up the valley."

"Further up the valley," Maurice said. "But there's only one other house in that direction. I have been there, you know," he added hastily.

"Lily told me you had stayed there."

"Well, but," Maurice persisted, "there is only one house, a private house."

"They have been building up there," the Canon said evasively. "Houses are springing up. It is a pity. Good night."

And he turned and walked away. Maurice stood looking after him. So they had been building in the valley, and End Cottage no longer possessed the distinction of being the finale of man in that Arcadia of woods and streams, and rugged hills on which the clouds brooded, from which the rain came like a mournful pilgrim to weep over the gentle shrine of Nature.

So they had been building in the valley.

Maurice made his way home. His mind was full of memories.

(To be continued.)

## CHAFFINCHES AND FLYCATCHERS.

"PINK, pink, pink!" The sharp note, half-metallic and half-sweet, is heard on every side; for the cock chaffinch has put on his wedding garment, and, now that he is preparing for the duties and pleasures of matrimony, or actually entering upon them, it is hard to believe that he is the same bird who, in the hard and struggling days of winter, was but one of a multitude of starving finches which beset the rickyard and fought for crumbs outside the breakfast-room window with the robins and the sparrows. Now his breast has an almost fiery glow; the white bands across his wings are dazzling, and the slaty-blue of his crown and the back of his neck is brighter than of yore. Why Linnaeus, followed by others, called the chaffinch *fringilla caelebs*, the bachelor finch, it is not easy to say. Certainly in the breeding season he is pleasantly uxorious, and, with his sober spouse, the latter dressed in russet washed with olive yellow, he performs the parts of architect and father and nurse in the most energetic manner conceivable. In architecture the light-hearted pair of birds excel not a little. Their nest is pretty as a structure as the cock-bird himself, and unobtrusive in character as the modest hen.

Unobtrusive is really the right word, for, although the Pink's nest is quite common in the immediate vicinity of every country home, it is often exceedingly difficult to find for the first time, and sometimes far from easy to find again, even when the searcher knows where to look. The charming picture of A TYPICAL NEST given in our illustration is an example of this. To the artist, who clearly placed himself in such a position that he could look down upon the eggs lying in their cup of deftly-twined horse-hair, the nest was manifest enough; but observe, that nest is hidden from the gaze of one inside the house by the abundant leaves and the clustering flowers of the supporting spray. It is above the line of the eye of the passer-by, and the leaves and flowers make it almost invisible from below. Here and there, perhaps, a part of its rounded outline comes within the scope of the eye, but the eye may well pass over it without being careless, for in tone and colour the nest is sure to be absolutely harmonious with its surroundings. The chaffinch is not colour-blind; he possesses, indeed, a sense of colour so delicate and accurate that the most

expert of artists might envy it, and he varies the materials of his home in precise accord with its site. If that be a hawthorn hedge, then shall the shapely but minute globe be of green moss without; if, as is often the case, a fork in an orchard tree be chosen, then shall the outer covering of the nursery be of hoary lichens matching precisely with the grey bark of the ancient apple tree. But the inside is always warm and cosy, and the architecture is of the first order of merit. For the eggs, they are nearly always of a vinous white irregularly splashed with rich port wine-coloured spots and streaks, shaped more or less like a comma. If the blue tint grows strong the colour of the markings degenerates to dark lilac.

Our next picture shows three young birds on the very point of flitting from the nest which has held them so far. One can



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

A TYPICAL NEST.

Copyright.

imagine the forlorn hen, a day or two later, singing with Jean Ingelow:—

"I had a nestful once of my own,  
O happy, happy I;  
Right dearly I loved them, but when they were grown,  
They spread out their wings to fly."

And fly these little wretches will, with many troubles before them, unless the country lad, who knows that they can be

treated as cage-birds, lays his hand on them before they leave home. Better liberty, with all its risks, than the tedious confinement of the cage. Yet the risks are considerable. There is peril from dashing sparrow-hawks or marauding jays; there is peril from cats, who hold high revel when the young birds are fluttering awkwardly in the shrubberies; and, worst of all, peril from boys, who, let us hope, never mean to be half as cruel and heavy-handed as they are. Then will come the awful winter; and of all sufferings upon which I reflect none seem to me more terrible than those of small birds when the world is frozen.

Let me pass now to a picture which has a peculiar fascination for me by reason of pleasant memories, a picture of FIVE SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS ALL ON A TREE, to be precise, all clinging, with an alert and wide-awake air, to the branch of an oak. So far they have done no flycatching for themselves, but those rather ragged wings will be ready to bear them soon. Then shall there be no more pleasant sight than to watch them at work. Almost always a single bird will take up his position on a bare post of a fence, so that he has a clear space round him. He will seem to be peering into space, meditating, thinking, dreaming indolently; suddenly, with a quick flutter of brown wings, he will rise a yard or two and, with wings whirring at an incredible pace, will keep his body motionless in mid air; and in that moment the fly is caught. "So," as Mr. Pepys might say, "back to the post and mighty pleased with himself." For my own part, my acquaintance with the flycatcher consists mostly in having watched him "seeking his meat from God," with ever-increasing delight, in Sussex, in Hertfordshire, and elsewhere, and in having found his nest, and red-splashed eggs within, in pleasant places. Always, in my experience, the webs of spiders have entered into the composition of the nest, as though one enemy of flies had persuaded another for poaching on his manor. The nests I remember best are two; one, sheltered overhead, rested on a turf of stonecrop in the grey-walled garden at home above the beehives; and the flycatchers thrive better than the bees. The other was in the Warden's garden at Winchester College, and I robbed it under difficulties, for it was Sunday afternoon, and the good second-master and his gentle wife had taken me to that



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

FIVE SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS.

Copyright



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B. ON THE POINT OF FLITTING.

Copyright

peaceful harbour of birds to walk; and, after finding that nest and robbing it, with great artifice and deceit, I had to guard the booty with great care for many an hour of society before I could blow it and add to my secured treasures. That nest was lodged in the ivy on the wall in the Warden's garden where the wooden bridge crosses an errant stream of silver Itchen. It was there twenty-five years ago; there will be another there early in June, for the spot is Muscicapa's Paradise.

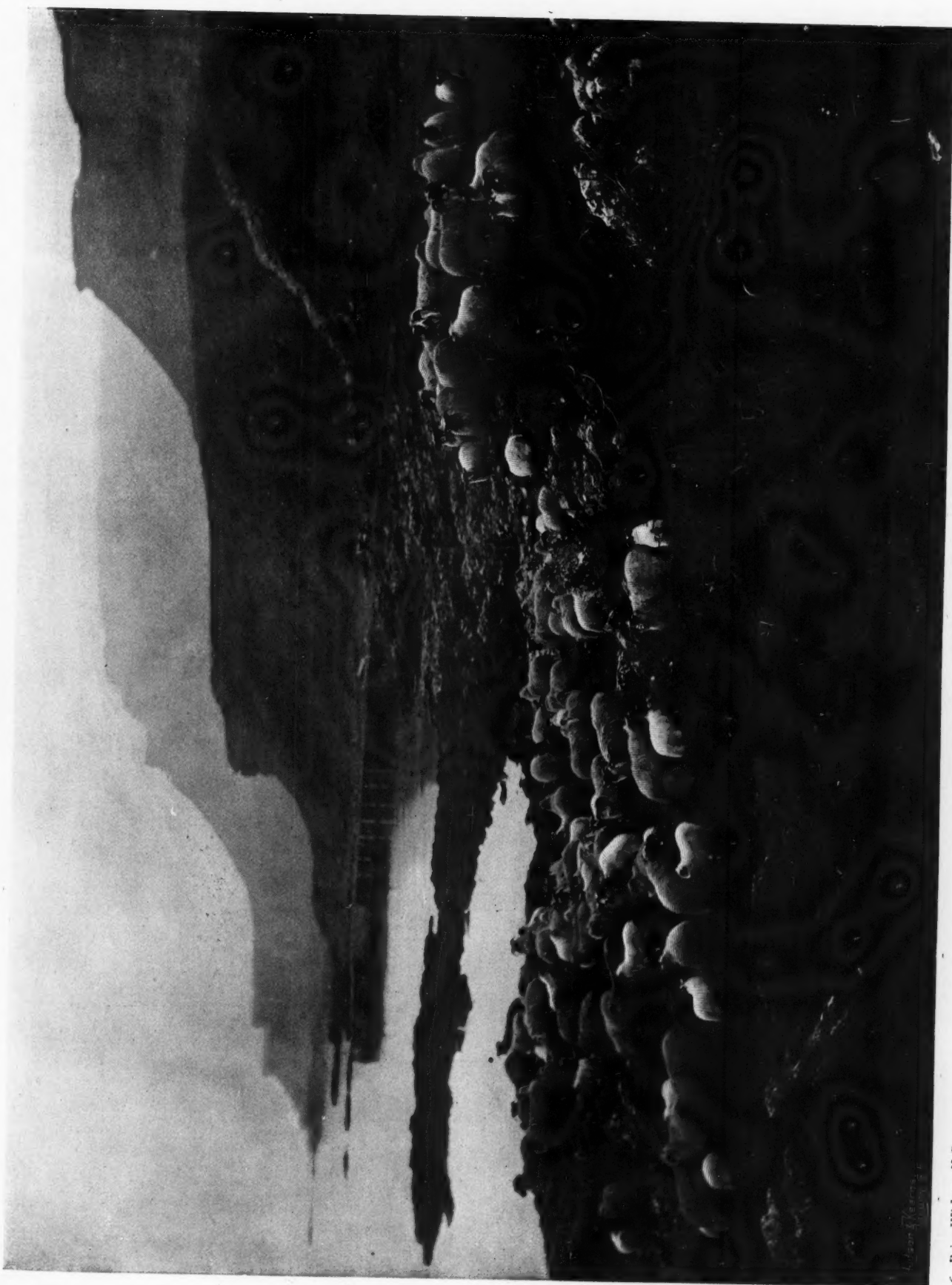
AUCUPS.

## Flocks on the Grampian Hills.

SUMMER on the Grampians is almost an ideal time and place for the shepherd's life. All day long the bees are busy in the thyme and heather, the sheep may be trusted to look after themselves and to find FEEDING GROUND FOR THE LAMBS, and the shepherd's cares are comprised in a daily walk over the mountain-side, an occasional muster of his flock, which his dog performs for him, and if he is a clever, thrifty body the occasional capture and disposal of a swarm of bees from his hive, for the Scotch shepherd, like those of Greece, has learnt the value of "heather honey," and that the bees will be working their hardest while he dozes comfortably by the burn-side under a sun-baked rock, or "meditates his muse upon the pipe" in the cool retreat of his bothy. Where the sheep farm is extensive

there will be a head shepherd and several under shepherds, and these will all club together in a single "shieling" or make two establishments, one at either end of the feeding-grounds, for headquarters. The only society seen by the shepherds is on Sunday, when they will walk miles to the kirk in the morning, and occasionally travel an equal distance to some other shepherd's hut to have a "crack" in the evening and compare notes on the sermons each has heard that day, the health of their flocks, and tidings of lost sheep. St. John has a story of a Highland congregation consisting almost exclusively of shepherds, who all brought their collies to church with them. The dogs usually showed indecorous joy when the men stood up at the close of the sermon. To avoid this all the shepherds remained seated,





C. K&O, W. H. H. N. B.

FEEDING GROUND FOR THE LAMBS.

Copyright.

and in answer to the minister's look of enquiry one of the elders replied, "We're only sitting to cheat the dogs."

Shearing takes place in the middle of June, after all danger from cold storms is considered to be over. Since Cheviot sheep became the favourites on most of the leading farms wool has been an increasingly important item, and the shearing is a serious business occupying several days, and recurring at intervals, as the hogs, wethers, and ewes are shorn at different times. The latter are not shorn till the middle of July. Usually the shepherds combine to shear each other's flocks. Some days before the shearing the flocks are washed, being made to swim several times a pool or river. The sheep are then kept on a clean pasture, shorn, clipped, and turned loose. Great care has to be taken that the lambs shall be returned to the right mothers, for after the latter are shorn their own children often do not know them. By September most of the four year old and five year old ewes are drafted off, and are soon seen LEAVING THE HILLS on the way to the Lowlands or the great sheep fairs. In summer the Highland shepherd's work is light and pleasant, but he deserves some compensation for the toils, anxiety, and hardship of the spring and winter. If he has not to dig his sheep out of snowdrifts or drive them through blinding storms to his

sheep. But there is plenty equally bad from America, Ireland, Siberia, and Australia. Can anyone imagine people taking the trouble to make butter in Siberia and Australia and ship it to the Scotch Highlands to be used to grease sheep's fleeces? The cost of greasing the sheep for the winter is considerable, reaching 9d. or 10d. a head, but it can hardly pay the butter-maker, the ship-owner, and the railway company, so we conclude the former is the loser. Besides acting as hair dresser the shepherd is also the sheep's tailor at this time. Many flock-owners prefer that their sheep should wear jackets in place of being smeared with butter and tar. This is called "bratting," and the "brats" are square pieces of sacking, dipped in tar, and fastened to the sheep's body with straps. The hind part is sewn on to the wool. The brats are put on in November and taken off in March or sometimes in April. This is considered a rather superior method to the wool-smearing, and keeps the fleece in better condition; for so bad is the weather on these Highland farms that rain and snow wash out most of the grease before the spring. But the sufferings of the flocks in winter and the labours of the shepherds are no longer so severe as formerly. Even in far Caithness the turnip, that great friend of the shepherd and the sheep, grows well under all the rigour of the Northern climate; and the more the



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

LEAVING THE HILLS,

Copyright.

previously-prepared shelters and rough fodder stacks in some secluded glen, he may always reckon on days and weeks of labour in "dressing" his sheep for the winter, and doing what he can to assist Nature in making them cold-proof and waterproof. The fleece of each sheep is smeared and soaked with mixtures of tar, tallow, oil, and turpentine. Formerly butter was used for this! It was shipped from the Orkneys, and was so unspeakably bad that it was used regularly for this purpose. We are glad to note that the Orkney butter has so improved that this source of supply is no longer available for smearing the

turnip spreads on the low ground the greater is the tendency to concentrate the flocks in proper shelter and feed them artificially in the depth of winter. The strangest thing is that, though the sheep like the turnips, they prefer to go out in the snow and scratch away till they reach the heather tops to eating most other artificial foods. They are born mountaineers, and thoroughly deserve their name of "heather sheep." The lambs are born about the end of April, often upon the bare hillside, and June once more sees them enjoying their summer on the Grampian Hills.

## SCENT.

**D**URING the last hundred years our knowledge of nearly all the sciences has increased by leaps and bounds; in fact, many interesting details about them, that were formerly unknown even to men of learning, are now common property. It therefore seems curious to have to admit that during the above period our information concerning "the noble science," as Mr. Delmé Radcliffe so aptly described the sport of fox-hunting, has been augmented but little. To prove this we have only to procure a copy of Beckford's "Thoughts upon Hunting," which was written as far back as the year 1779, and to note that

it is thoroughly up to date with the exception of a few trifling differences. But if there is one point more than another on which our knowledge has remained stationary, it is that of scent, for we must admit not only that we are no more enlightened about it than were our grandfathers, but that we know practically nothing concerning its more subtle details, and that all our favourite theories are continually being upset by solid facts. It is therefore with no easy mind that I take up my pen to write about this wondrous power, and I can only hope to jot down a few personal observations, and not to advance any elaborate reasonings whereby a good scenting day may be distinguished from a bad one before hounds are thrown into covert. Perhaps a great scientist will one day come forward and enlighten us on this latter point, and give us an instrument by which



we shall be able to tell when the atmosphere is most suitable for scent.

There is one rule, and one alone, concerning scent to which there are very few exceptions—namely, that there is very seldom any lasting scent during stormy weather, and that if hounds run at all in a period of warring elements it is only by fits and starts. Again, in strong winds hounds can hardly ever run down and only occasionally up wind; in fact, light breezes are much more favourable for hunting, for gales seem to blow the scent away altogether. An old song says that “a southerly wind and a cloudy sky proclaim the hunting morn,” but the muse does not go on to tell us in what country or countries these conditions hold good, for a wind that is most favourable to scent in one part of the kingdom may be just the reverse in another. I have personally noticed, however, that in those countries that border on or are near the coast, when the wind comes off the sea there is very often a good scent; whether this is to do with the ozone that is blown inland or not I cannot say. Incidentally I may remark, however, that when hounds are taken for exercise on the sands near the sea, they always show great signs of excitement, and are very riotous. I was told of this by an M.F.H. of long standing and experience, and I have noticed much the same thing when puppy-walking. In advance of my theory regarding scent being often good when the wind is off the sea, I may say that in Lincolnshire the most favourable quarter for the wind to be in on a hunting morning is the east; in fact, hounds in that county seldom run with the wind in any other quarter. On the South Coast, on the other hand, I have often seen hounds run very hard with the wind in the south, and one instance of this particularly occurs to my mind. It happened some years ago with a newly-formed pack of foxhounds, and on their second morning's cub-hunting, therefore one scarcely expected to see any very brilliant performance, as they were more or less a scratch pack; but in hunting, as in many other walks of life, it is the unexpected that generally happens. On this occasion the wind was in the south, and during the cubbing operations a fine misty rain was falling, which made the previously sun-baked ground very slippery, especially on grassy hillsides.

We began by killing a cub in covert, and a move was afterwards made to a little patch of gorse half a mile further on. A fox, he must have been an old one, went away as soon as we commenced to draw; hounds were on his line in an instant, and did not wait to settle down to the scent, but raced away from the commencement. For about half an hour they ran as if tied to him, and there was not a vestige of a check during that time. We had all our work cut out to keep anywhere near them, this being, of course, made more difficult by the thick rain that was falling; many people, in consequence, got thrown out, and saw no more of hounds that day. At last the fox found an open earth, which he promptly availed himself of, and thus finished as fast a thirty minutes as the heart of man could desire. As I have mentioned before, the pack was a scratch one, and the hounds could have known little about one another, consequently scent on this occasion must have been of the burning order. At many other times also I have seen, when hunting in the South, a rare scent with the wind off the water.

In the recently-published “Encyclopædia of Sport,” Lord Coventry says, “When hounds exhibit unusual keenness on their road to meet, when they smell strong coming out of kennel, when paving stones sweat, when the barometer

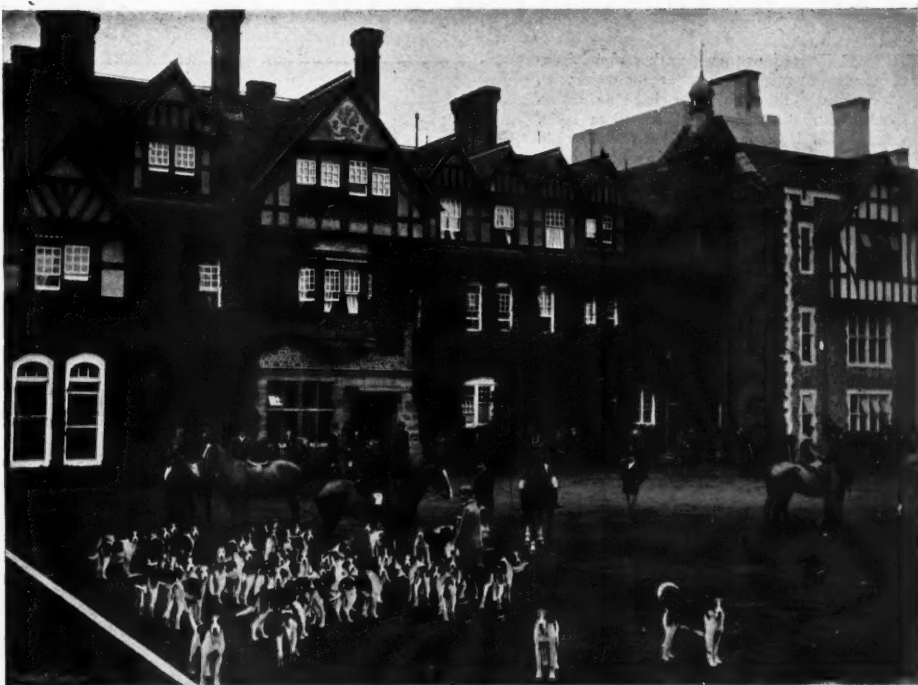


Photo. G. West,

THE CHIDDINGFOLD MEET AT LEA PARK.

Godalming.

rises, when the atmosphere is so clear that you can almost count the thorns upon the hedges—all these are favourable signs which are often found to denote a scent.”

As regards, however, the third and fourth signs, I think they should be taken together, and then perhaps there is no truer oracle, for during the first month of the present year, when we had, at any rate in the South, a spell of excellent scenting weather, my groom was continually telling me of the stable bricks sweating, and saying that they never dried; but during that period the barometer stood very high, and varied from day to day very slightly. On nearly every occasion that I hunted during January scent was excellent, and more good runs fell to my lot during that month than during the preceding three months, or for the matter of that, up to the time of writing these lines.

On some days, scent seems to change from good to bad, or *vice versa*, for no apparent atmospheric reason, but I think on occasions like the above we can generally attribute these mutations to the running of the foxes themselves, for a straight-necked old customer will leave far more “smell” behind him than a little twisting vixen. Foxes will seldom make long points unless they know where they are going to, and have a great knowledge of the country, but there are days, and alas! plenty of them, when hounds cannot follow the boldest fox and the cause can generally be put down either to stormy weather or the air being too rarified, and the scent in consequence rising above the pack.

Although the condition and the kind of ground hunted over have some influence on scent, yet they appear to affect it in a rather less degree than the atmosphere does. The poet Somerville, author of “The Chase,” was obviously of this opinion, for he writes:—

“With nostrils opening wide, o’er hill, o’er dale,  
The vigorous hounds pursue, with ev’ry breath  
Inhale the grateful steam, quick pleasures sting  
Their tingling nerves, while they their thanks repay,  
And in triumphant melody confess  
The titillating joy. Thus, on the air  
Depend the hunter’s hopes.”

When the ground is moist, it is supposed to retain the scent better than when dry, while grass land generally carries a more holding scent than plough; yet we have all constantly observed hounds running hard across dry ploughed fields, knocking up the dust in the course of their passage, whilst we ride after them as best we may, thinking of little else but our horses’ fore legs.

There is no doubt that the scent of a fox increases after he has been roused some little time and his body begins to perspire, but some writers would have us believe that it decreases at the finish, when the game is hard pressed, and in this way they account for the mysterious manner in which many a beaten fox escapes.

The theory is, I think, incorrect, and the disappearance of the fox at the end of a good run is often due to his having lain down in an outhouse or a convenient piece of covert, and hounds in consequence over-running the line. Foxes will, when they find the pack close to their heels, twist and turn in all directions; in fact there is no accounting for what a beaten fox will do when hard pressed by his pursuers.

HELIOS.



Photo. G. West,

PALM HOUSE AT LEA PARK

Godalming.

## THE CHIDDINGFOLD AT LEA PARK.

THE illustrations to which these few observations refer serve a three-fold purpose.

Firstly, they show us a charming, many-gabled country house in the Elizabethan style. In front of it is a meet of the Chiddingfold Foxhounds, of which mention has been made recently in these columns. No more, therefore, need be said for the moment of these well-known hounds than that, pleasant as is the appearance they make to the eye from the point of view of a spectator outside the house, they must have formed a pretty sight to one looking, like Dido from her watch-tower, from that charming oriel window above the hospitable door. Nor is that epithet "hospitable" used in a conventional or an otiose style. It opens, as the sportsmen of those parts know full well, readily and eagerly; and after it has swung upon its hinges the man who has the courage to take an extra breakfast with the prospect of a hard day's hunting in front of him will soon find himself in the Palm House with a true hunting breakfast spread out before him. Opinions may differ as to the expediency of indulging in this pleasant kind of feast; indeed, they must differ since sound digestions are not distributed universally among men. But your hunting man is usually of lusty health, and such an one may "stretch out his hands to the victuals lying before him" with all the heartiness of a Homeric hero. Certain it is that, if breakfast there be, it should be laid with taste; and it is equally certain that there could be no prettier place in which to give a hunt breakfast than the Palm House at Lea Park. Such palm houses, by the way, spacious and lofty edifices, vaulted in the roof and attached, as we take this one to be, to the main structure of the house, are by no means as frequently to be seen and enjoyed in England as in Ireland; and this example gives us the more pleasure. We have seen then a delightful country house, the hounds that will make a good day's sport, the preparations for the joyous banquet. But the time comes every day when no man can hunt, and then the pleasures of life in an English country house find their complement and completion beneath the shaded lights, where men keen on the game, and ladies, handling the cue with grace and precision, urge the ivory ball. In a fine country house we always look for a good billiard-room, and generally—such is the taste of Englishmen—we find it. Without the billiard-room, indeed, country life, in the winter time at least, would be deprived of one of its chief pleasures. When on other than a hunting day you have explored the wonders and curious beauties of the Devil's Punchbowl, or stretched your legs on Hindhead to survey the heaths and woods of Surrey, it must be a pleasant thing indeed to retire to the billiard-room at Lea Park. That billiard-room would be hard to excel. The whole of the work in connection with the room has been executed by Messrs. George Wright and Sons, the well-known makers. What beautiful work it is that the picture discloses. In the Renaissance style perhaps nothing better of the kind, has ever been done. Choice woods and fine inlays, rich carving, beautiful panelling, excellent metal work, and the remarkably good character of the table itself, mark this out as a billiard-room of extraordinarily splendid character.



*J. Bullock and Co.,*

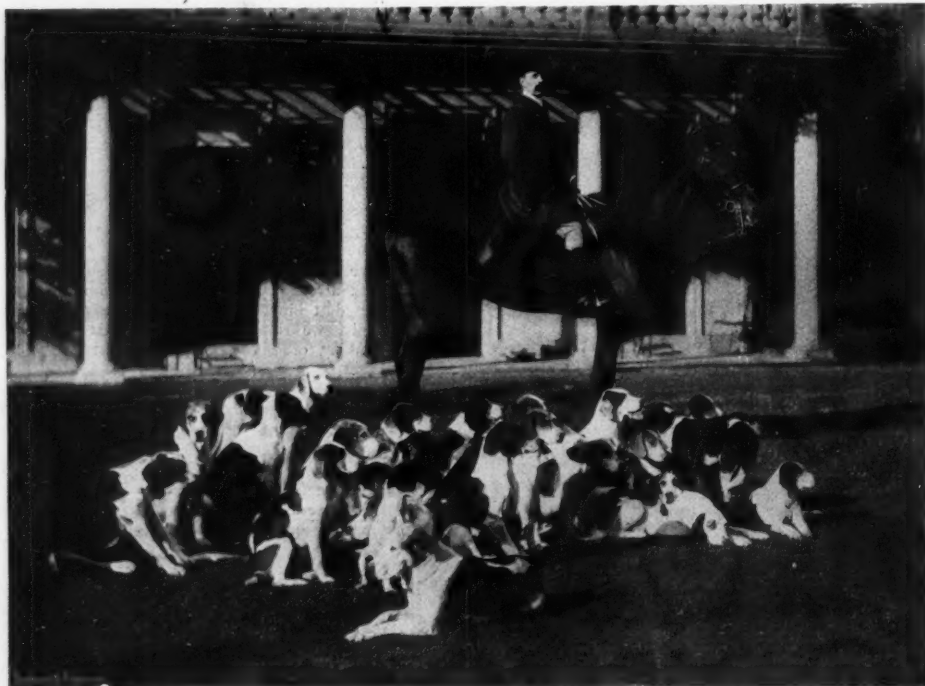
*THE BILLIARD-ROOM AT LEA PARK.*

*Strand.*

## FOX-HUNTING IN WALES.

THAT "a fast forty minutes that ends with a kill," over the best part of a good country with flying fences and no check, is a form of enjoyment very hard to beat, no one who has experienced it will attempt to deny. There are however many packs whose locality is far removed from such a possibility, but whose followers, provided genuine lovers of hounds and hunting, can derive much pleasure from rough sport among the mountains of Wales. It is of one of these packs, the Plas Machynlleth, with the Master, Lord Henry Vane Tempest, that a picture is given to-day. Some time ago a photograph of the Plas Machynlleth Harriers was published in *COUNTRY LIFE*, and it speaks well for the sporting tendency of the Plas family that the two packs should own the same Master and be kennelled under the same roof. The harriers are however far the oldest pack, and date in fact from 1797. It was in kindly response to an appeal from the tenants and neighbours of the Dowager Lady Londonderry's Montgomeryshire estate that Lord Henry Vane Tempest agreed to add a small pack of foxhounds in 1895. Previously the country had been hunted by Mr. Pryse's hounds, but they having been temporarily done away with, the foxes had increased considerably and were doing much damage to lambs and poultry. In keeping them down the little pack has been most successful, and it has shown some excellent sport. The country is of course very rough, and in places it is almost impossible to follow hounds except on foot, but it carries a fair scent; and with a clever cob and a determination not to be left behind, a great deal of sport can be seen and much clever hound work enjoyed.

There are few prettier sights on a bright morning in early autumn than that of the pack drawing up to a fox among the grey rocks and purple heather of the famous Llynant Valley, while the sun shines on the wide extent of Cardigan Bay and gradually dispels the mists that envelop the tops of the mountains. In such a country long hunts are of course rather the rule than the exception, and the patience of hounds and huntsman is often sorely tried before another pad is nailed to the kennel door and another kill is chronicled in the kennel diary. Welsh foxes are proverbially stout-hearted and difficult to catch, and the distances they go are extraordinary; indeed to run one for five-and-twenty miles along the slopes of Plinlimmon is by no means a rare occurrence. Early in March last season the Plas Machynlleth hounds ran a fox found in the Rhosygarreg Rocks for thirty odd miles and killed him near Llanbrynmair, after hunting him steadily for four and a-half hours, while on November 19th they completely beat their record by killing a fox found near Llanidloes that they had stuck to gamely for over six hours, and which must have covered very little short of fifty miles, the line traversing the counties of Montgomery, Cardigan, and Brecon. Not a bad performance for hounds, and one that speaks well for their pluck and perseverance, for during the greater part of the run they were of necessity totally unaided. The re-establishment of Mr. Pryse's pack has considerably curtailed the country hunted by the Plas hounds, but still there



*Photo. by Pearce.*

*THE PLAS MACHYNLLETH HOUNDS.*

*Machynlleth.*



is sufficient left to afford sport and enjoyment throughout the season. That the kindness of Lord Henry Vane Tempest in keeping foxhounds in this neighbourhood is fully appreciated by the followers of his pack was very suitably acknowledged not long ago, when he was presented with a hunting crop, a silver horn, a flask, and a large picture of himself and hounds, from which the photograph

published to-day is taken. The pack consists of draughts from among the best kennels in England, and though mostly tutored over the level pastures of the Shires, the ups and downs of mountain hunting in no way come amiss to them, but rather serve to increase the keenness that enables them to show the sport they do.

MERIONETH.

## THE UNIVERSITY CREWS AT PUTNEY.

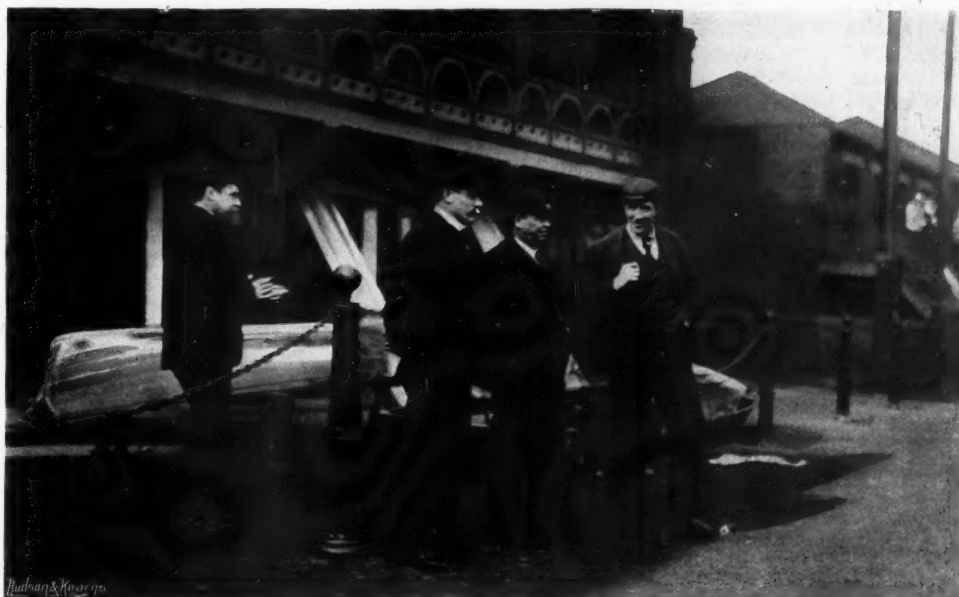
FEW who took stock of the Cambridge "Trial Eights" at Ely last December, or who saw the University eight at work in the early days of term, would have anticipated that a crew of any class would be modelled out of the then available material; still less so if they had known that two of the new candidates who seemed most promising at the close of last term—to wit, Ballard, of Trinity Hall, and Stobart, of Pembroke—would go amiss in health before Lent arrived, and thereby still further reduce the ranks of recruits. Oxford had four, and later on five, old hands to make a nucleus, while Cambridge had but two in residence, of whom eventually only one was requisitioned. However, "*Doctrina sed viru promovet insitam*"; and the present form of the Cambridge crew is tribute and testimonial to scientific coaching, and enough to make any instructor's reputation, even if it were a maiden and solitary achievement. The length, swing, and recovery of the crew are good; in all three of these details, when viewed in profile, they show to better advantage than Oxford. The weak point of the crew is what is termed "watermanship," i.e., the art of "sitting" and balancing a boat, and keeping her on an even keel, rectifying by an almost unconscious counterpoise of body any inequality of blade or of swing, or buffet from a wave, which tend to send the ship off an even keel. If a boat rolls off a true keel, the oarsmen cannot apply full power until she is righted. This art of balance takes much longer to acquire than the other general details of action of leg, loin, back, arms, and wrists, which, when duly conjoined, compose a stroke and its recovery. The earlier a man learns to row, *ceteris paribus*, the sooner and the more fully does he attain watermanship or some smattering of it. Now all the Oxonians are school-made oars, who could race in keelless boats before they entered the University, while Cambridge have only two such school oars (at stroke and seven). All the other Cantabs have been "manufactured" by coaching since their matriculation. A result of early school rowing is that the muscles specially required for rowing are developed sooner and more fully than they would be if the pupil did not sit in a boat until he was eighteen and upwards in age. Hence (*ceteris paribus* again) such school oars are somewhat stronger in a boat, in ratio to their weight, than similar samples of humanity who have begun rowing only in manhood instead of in boyhood. The late gravitations of old Eton oars to two colleges, both Oxonian, New and Magdalen, have tended to give Oxford a distinct pull over Cambridge during the last eight years.



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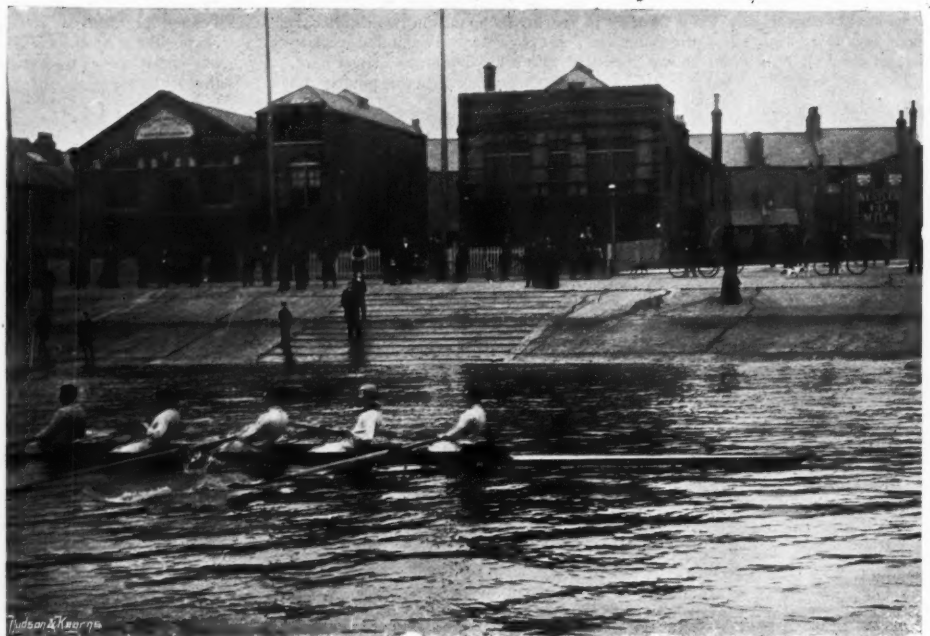
OXFORD: "GET READY—FIDDLE!"

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and to give these two colleges a corresponding advantage over other Oxford college clubs.

Cambridge had a disappointment three weeks before the race, when their then stroke, Steele, of Trinity Hall, broke down; but, as a matter of opinion, the disappointment, though discouraging for the moment, has been only nominal, and the crew seems to have been actually improved in style and prospects by the substitution of Bell, the only old "blue" in the boat, at stroke; while the introduction of Beale to the vacancy adds weight and strength to the crew. The so-called "time" trials of the first fortnight on the tideway go for very little; conditions of wind and water vary daily, and even the oldest experts are often in doubt how to measure the merits of the rival races and the timings that occur on different tides. Roughly speaking, Oxford seemed to have the greater capacity for pace, while Cambridge were at work in old Clasper craft, and Oxford in a new ship by Rough. At the close of last week a new Rough arrived for Cambridge, and their pace, even in easy work, could be seen to be at once greatly improved—sufficient to make the race still an open one in prospect, and the result to depend largely upon the rival efforts of the two coaches during the last five days of practice (which have not come off at the date of writing these remarks). Neither crew has as yet accomplished what could be called a really good piece of steady rowing for any distance of a mile or more. All the long courses have been below par.

The best sample out of mediocre efforts was on Tuesday, the 15th, by Oxford, from Putney to Hammersmith, on a neap flood-tide, short of its best force, in a fraction under eight minutes. There was fair pace at the close of this spin, but a tendency to short swing under the faster stroke. On Friday, the 18th, Oxford might have done a creditable time by the close if they had, firstly, waited half an hour more for the incipient ebb to acquire force, and, secondly, had rowed not less than thirty-two in the middle of the course (they dropped to thirty most of the way). Their finish at racing pace for the final minute, when they shot by a Leander scratch, was the speediest performance up to date of either crew. It showed that they had plenty in hand, and had not been extended up to that point. The question is, for how many minutes they could hold that extreme pace? If for only as much as six minutes, when pinched, they would probably have the race in hand on the 26th. The work of the



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#### THE LEANDER CREW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

first three days of the concluding week now opening will throw more light on their powers of maintaining high pressure, and at the same time will enlighten us as to what improvement in travelling power the new boat bestows on Cambridge.

A weak point in both crews at the beginning of training lay in the two sevens as compared to the average quality of the rest of the stuff. Neither seemed to couple up the stroke satisfactorily to the rest of the crew, and each had a tendency to be late into the water. Careful coaching has rectified much of this, and has raised the standard of style in both of the men. The Oxford seven was hard tested, and came well out of the ordeal in the final rush on Friday, when Gold piled up high pressure for the final minute of the trial spin on the ebb tide. The Cambridge seven has been similarly improved and moulded in his slower paces, but has not yet been tested to the same extent for a final squeeze when tired and at the end of a hard grind. To look at his amended form, he will probably, when a pinch comes, similarly rise to the occasion like his rival.

The best sample of genuine and rapid manufacture of an oar out of a broomstick, in less than three months, is to be seen in the Cantab No. 5, who has now shaped like a veteran as to swing, recovery, and work, and has nothing but physiognomy left to identify him with the raw hand who floundered untaught in a Jesus four at Henley, or who toiled in the rough in a losing trial eight in December. The absolute pick of the Cambridge crew, and the best all-round style in both boats, is to be seen in the Cantab six.

The two strongest but also untidiest oars are the two old hands at five and six of Oxford. If they could only economise strength by acquiring style like the lighter Cantab six, they would be actually first-class; even as it is they are invaluable to Oxford. The Oxford four has not the length of build of the three men just named, but he makes the utmost use of his reach, and does capital work in very good style, showing the best body and arm action, taken all round, of any in the Oxford crew. At the date of writing neither crew seems to come up to the standard of last year's victors; but it has to be remembered, when thus instituting invidious comparisons between past and present crews, that the impression on the memory as to the past is usually that of the past at its best, whereas the crews of this year may finally attain a higher standard than they now display.



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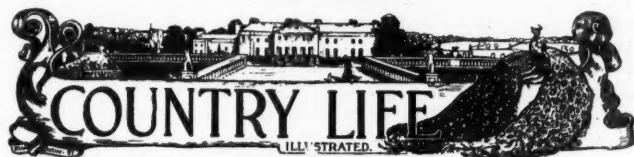
#### CAMBRIDGE PUTTING OFF.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



## OUR PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATION.

LADY WOLVERTON, the subject of our portrait illustration, was married to the fourth Baron Wolverton, a partner in the historic banking house of Glyn, Mills, and Currie, in 1895. Before marriage she was Lady Edith Amelia Ward, being the daughter of the first Earl of Dudley. The Ward family traces its origin to Humble Ward, son of an opulent goldsmith, who in the time of Charles I. married the heiress of Edward, the eighth Baron Sutton of Dudley. Iwerne Minster House, Blandford, is the country seat of Lord and Lady Wolverton.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to receive for consideration photographs, instantaneous or otherwise, besides literary contributions, in the shape of articles and descriptions, as well as short stories, sporting or otherwise, not exceeding 2,000 words. Contributors are specially requested to place their names and addresses on their MSS. and on the backs of photographs. The Editor will not be responsible for the return of artistic or literary contributions which he may not be able to use, and the receipt of a proof must not be taken as evidence that an article is accepted. Publication in COUNTRY LIFE alone will be recognised as acceptance. Where stamps are enclosed, the Editor will do his best to return those contributions which he does not require.

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## Point to Point Steeplechases.

CONSIDERING the low estate to which the fine old English sport of steeplechasing has been brought in these days, it is the more satisfactory to note the vigorous growth and increasing popularity of the point to point meetings which have now become an annual institution with Parliament and the Bar, and almost every regiment and hunt in the kingdom. It was in racing of this description that steeplechasing proper had its origin. Hunting men have always, from the earliest days, been apt to grow argumentative over the respective merits of their own and their friends' horses, and so it came about that, in order to decide this point, men took to matching their horses against each other across the country over which they were used

to hunt. In these sporting events the competitors usually started at an agreed distance from some church steeple, or other conspicuous object, to which they found their way as best they could, and this was no doubt the origin of the word steeplechasing. The result of a race of this sort naturally depended almost as much on the rider's quickness of observation, decision, and eye for a country, as on the speed and cleverness of his horse, and so, as time went on, these lines of country got to be more and more marked with flags. The spectators next began to complain that they could see little or nothing of races run in a perfectly straight line for a distance of four or more miles. The courses over which they were run, therefore, assumed a shape which enabled the public to see what was going on from start to finish. Stands and enclosures followed, as a matter of course, and so the old sort of steeplechasing was eventually evolved. We say the old sort advisedly, because there is a very wide difference indeed between the sport as it existed forty years ago and as it is carried on now. In those days steeplechases were still, for the most part, run over natural countries. Flags were put into the existing fences of the country, and the horses had to jump between them, but the fences themselves were very seldom touched. These were the days in which the sport was at the zenith of its fame and popularity. There was some variety about it then; no two courses were quite alike, and a horse's success depended much more on his jumping capacities, and less on his speed, than is the case now. Hunting men, too, took a keen interest in the sport, and horses which had especially distinguished themselves with hounds during the hunting season were usually given a chance of flying at higher game between the flags. If they proved successes they went into a training stable and became professional chasers; if not, they went back to the hunting-field. The natural result of this was that a number of farmers and hunting men went in for breeding big, powerful horses, thorough-bred or practically so, for the express purpose of selling them as steeplechasers or high-class hunters.

Then the third period in the history of the sport began. Enclosed courses and artificial fences came into vogue, whilst the latter were every year made smaller, until at last steeplechases became such a farce that the National Hunt authorities were compelled to interfere. With the most laudable intentions they laid down hard and fast rules regulating the size, shape, and number of the fences on all steeplechase courses. This was the fatal mistake which has ruined the sport. For artificial courses these rules were admirable, but to make them applicable to natural courses as well was madness. What has been the result? The old-fashioned natural "countries," which really wanted jumping, and which required a good all-round performer to win over them, have disappeared, and as a consequence the old class of horse that we used to see running over them is no longer bred. What have we got in their place? "Regulation" courses built to pattern, and therefore every one exactly alike; and horses which have never learnt to jump properly, and most of whom had their legs shaken and their tempers soured in some flat-race training stable before they were rattled over two or three sloping bundles of dead sticks, and then called steeplechasers. Another unfortunate result of putting an end to the old country courses has been that it has effectually closed the hunting-field as a recruiting ground for steeplechasers.

Steeplechasing has in consequence now arrived at this pitch, that, with the exception of Aintree, there is not a course in England fit to be called a steeplechase course, that there are hardly any horses in training who could jump a proper "country," and that scarcely anyone takes the smallest interest in the sport. Now then is the chance for point to point steeplechasing. Once revive this, and put it on a proper footing, and all the old interest in racing over a "country" will be restored. We are glad to think that things seem to be tending in this direction. All that is wanted is that the sport shall be taken in hand by a few well-known sportsmen, and a few simple regulations drawn up for its control. The most important of these, in our opinion, should be that no fence shall be touched (except to fill up gaps, or mend broken rails), and that no flags shall be used except to mark turning points. We were at one meeting last year where part of every fence in the line had been cut down and made easy, and at another where several fences were marked with flags. We do not see any reason why these races should not be run on circular courses, if wished, and the turning points shown by flags, but these should always be in the middle of a field, and never in a fence. Neither is there any reason for limiting the number of races on the card, as is at present the case. In fact we think that this branch of sport should be taken out of the hands of the National Hunt authorities altogether, and treated as a distinct sport of itself, with its own committee and its own rules. We should then once more see some steeplechasing worth the name. The existing class of chasing would of course go on just the same, and would continue to cater for those people who like that sort of thing, whilst for those who prefer to see real steeplechase horses running over real steeplechase "countries" there would be the modernised and improved "point to point" meetings.

## COUNTRY NOTES

READERS of COUNTRY LIFE will have observed with keen pleasure that the directors of the Great Western Railway, in proper deference to public opinion, have withdrawn the Bill which threatened to destroy, or at any rate to impair, the beauties of the Henley Course. It is to be observed from Mr. Wilkinson's letter on the subject that the scheme is not absolutely dropped. The company hopes, in due course, to educate the public mind, and to reconcile it to the idea of the Thames defaced and its banks disfigured. To this, as having played our part in showing by words and pictures how destructive the scheme would have been to the landscape if it had been carried out, we reply that forewarned is forearmed. The friends of natural beauty know what they have to expect, and it must be confessed that thanks are due to the Great Western authorities for their candour in giving notice of their intentions. Also it must be said that Mr. Wilkinson's letter was a model example of the art of climbing down with dignity and grace. By the way, another honest and dignified act has recently been performed by the Great Western Railway. To us, who treat not of politics, it mattered not at all whether Mr. Campbell succeeded or failed in his candidature for Pembrokeshire. There is, however, no doubt that the opposition offered by the company, of which his father, Lord Emlyn, is chairman, to the formation of the Fishguard and North Pembrokeshire Railway, was very unpopular among the Pembroke folk, who really thought that the Great Western Railway intended to deprive them of means of communication with the outer world. It now turns out that the Great Western have bought the whole branch, which they are likely to work far more effectually than was to be expected of the original promoters. It was honest, we think, in Lord Emlyn not to make the announcement earlier. It might have changed the result of the election; but it would have caused nasty things to be said.

Colonel Henry Dyer, who died suddenly on Monday, was not only a great leader in the high aristocracy of commerce and a man of consummate ability, but also a distinguished soldier and one of the most charming men that England has seen for many a long day. As a young man he had won no little honour as a soldier, having served with distinction in the Crimea and in the Mutiny. During the recent engineering strike he was abused in the most scurrilous fashion; and it is not to be denied that he was wounded by the insults hurled at him. But even in the midst of the crisis he could tell a story against himself. Thus he would recount that, on one of his visits to London, being detained by business, he came in very late to a great dinner party. Making his way to his seat next his hostess, he observed that there was a titter at the other end of the table. Later he learned the cause. A great lady had asked his host who he was, and on learning his name had said, "Well, he does not look the ruffian he really is." He was no ruffian, but a true-hearted Englishman; but the rest of her observation was quite appropriate, for a more handsome, intellectual-looking, and well-groomed man than Henry Dyer was never seen.

Never was there a stronger example than Mr. Aubrey Beardsley of really great artistic talent utterly misapplied. His line drawing was of unprecedented beauty; his subjects and his treatment of them were alike disgusting. His early death—he was only twenty-four—is, therefore, an event which we record with mixed feelings; for he was immensely clever, but his work had an influence for evil over art and over his generation. A correspondent forwards to us a story concerning the fate of some of his drawings which is worth telling: "Once upon a time, in the days of the *Yellow Book*," he writes, "I happened to be in the private room of a great printer and to cast my eye over the proofs of some drawings by Mr. Beardsley intended for publication in that evanescent periodical. I observed that they were beautiful and powerful, but dangerous. The great printer asked what my meaning might be. I pointed out to him that there is a liability of printers no less than of editors, and that, when a great newspaper is accused of criminal libel, the nominal printer is the culprit who takes his place in the dock at the Old Bailey. The pictures in question did not appear."

The very successful sale of Irish Industrial products at Lansdowne House last week calls attention to the great services which are being performed by ladies of high rank by the promotion of local industries in various parts of the country. Of the good results produced in Ireland, those who visited the

wonderful exhibition in Dublin, when the Duke and Duchess of York paid their memorable visit to Ireland last autumn, can have no doubt. The tweeds and friezes, the peasant cloaks are of the finest quality and substances; the laces and the ribbon embroidery are beautiful beyond belief. But there are other parts of the country, some of them not less in need of fostering care, in which similar work has been and is being carried on. The Duchess of Sutherland, for example, gives not only patronage, which is a mere affair of money, but honest and unremitting personal labour, to the development of the cottage weaving in poverty-stricken districts of the Highlands and islands of Scotland. Also in Wales, where cloth of adamantine durability but of hideous pattern is made in many a small one-family factory, called a "pandy," Lady Eva Wyndham Quin is endeavouring to influence the peasants to adapt their patterns to the market. She will meet, we fear, with difficulties; for we have tried the same kind of plan. The weaver, as you give your directions with your order, is sympathetic and agrees to all you say. But when the piece of cloth arrives it is not in the least like what you ordered. You may have ordered a beautiful light blue and have shown him the yarn from which he was to make it. He will send you a navy blue, almost black, and he will assure you that you would not have liked what you ordered.

Appearing as we do on the eve of the University Boat Race, we have much pleasure in publishing an illustrated article concerning the crews, of which the letter-press comes from the expert pen of Mr. W. B. Woodgate. He is to our mind the most acute and the most impartial of the expert critics of oarsmanship. Renowned in his day as a rowing man of the first order of merit, he has never failed to follow the progress of the training of the crews since his rowing days, or at any rate his racing days, were over. At the moment of writing we have not seen his opinion in black and white; but it is our firm intention to support it in the usual way (if it coincides with predilections quite separate from rowing) when we have seen it. A modest wager of gloves or what you will on the University Boat Race stands upon an elevated pedestal of morality compared with a bet upon a horse. We firmly believe that even a bishop or a Nonconformist divine may back his old University with an unruffled conscience in the race which has never known roguery. *Dulce est desipere in loco*; and there is no "locus" better than the Boat Race or the Boat Race dinner.

Anxiety with regard to the fate of Lord Delamere's expedition has long passed; but it is none the less pleasant to hear that he has arrived safely and in good health at Lake Baringo, in British East Africa, and that he has had excellent sport. How these little paragraphs from the wilds of Africa make the home-stayer's mouth water.

The great sale at Avery Hill last week was a success from beginning to end, and if the big pictures the late Colonel North appeared to delight in collecting did not realise a high price per foot, the smaller ones sold exceedingly well. Frith's fine series, "The Road to Ruin," were cheap at £10 guineas, as also was Nasmyth's "Falls of Shira," said to have been presented to Colonel North by Lord Rothschild; whilst the immense paintings, "Royal Ascot" and "A Meet of the Coaching Club in Hyde Park," were not dear at 135 guineas and 82 guineas respectively, containing as they do excellent portraits of racing and coaching celebrities. All the coursing pictures went very cheaply, a beautiful oil painting of the great Fullerton being knocked down at £10 10s., but the valuable collection of sporting trophies evoked very keen competition, dealers, however, quite outbidding private buyers. Captain North made a hard effort to secure the Brighton Cup, a very handsome trophy won by Philomel, but an Oxford Street agent stayed the longer. The stuffed hares killed by Fullerton in most of his Waterloo finals sold very poorly, £8 8s. being by no means an extravagant price for the case containing three fine specimens of Altcar demons. Of the contents of the library the sporting books sold the best, most of them realising their full value.

Two rather peculiar incidents happened with foxhounds in Ireland lately. The first was with the King's County Hounds when they met at Rockforest on the 10th of March. While the Master, Mr. Assheton Biddulph, was drawing the wonderfully-named covert known as "Tatter Jack Walshe's Wood," a hound called Tollsman got away unseen with a fox, hunted him to Rockforest and back, killing him single-handed in presence of a good number of onlookers, amongst whom was Toole, the earth stopper, who secured the pate and brush. The other incident was with the United Hunt Club. A fox was found at Condon's Hill, and after a smart run took hounds to Mogely Castle, the residence of Colonel Des Barre, in through the shrubberies in the lawn, when, being hard pressed, Reynard jumped into a cave, about ten feet in depth, and was followed by six couples of hounds. Wheatley, the first whip, and Mr. Corry, of Fermoy, also went down on this subterranean



chase, which lasted over a quarter of an hour, and which ended in the death of the fox. Hounds, men, and fox were a sight to see when they reached *terra firma* again.

It was a new and not altogether bad notion of Mr. Sheriff Dewar to present a challenge shield for competition in a match between the pick of the amateur and professional football players. The excellence of the idea lies not so much in the shield, which is, however, a Homeric wonder of workmanship, as in its application to the cause of charity. The crowd at the Crystal Palace on Saturday even exceeded expectation; but the interest in such encounters has been conspicuously growing for some time, and the keenness has been further stimulated by the exceptional success of the amateurs during this season. On Saturday Sheffield United were unanimously selected to champion professionalism, and the Corinthians had got together perhaps as strong a combination as possible. Of course, the Corinthians can hardly be regarded as one club, inasmuch as residence has nothing to do with qualification for membership, but the advantage of the amateurs in wideness of selection was at least counterbalanced by the benefit accruing to the professionals from having played together as a team for a complete season. The match may be regarded in a true sense as a "test" match, and perhaps the result of a pointless draw may be considered a just conclusion. At the same time, the amateurs had the better of the game, and were, perhaps, a little more handicapped by the wetness of the ground. If, in order to reach a definite conclusion, the game can be replayed, the several charities will indeed have reason to thank their supporters, the public, and the players of football. It is probable from their play in the match that Smith, Oakley, and Alexander, of the amateurs, will be selected for the next International match.

It is very comforting to have a little cheering success to speak of after so much disaster as we have had to suffer, vicariously, with Mr. Stoddart in Australia. The last match, at the time of writing—not a test match, but against Victoria; still, we have learned to be grateful for small mercies—has ended in a gallant win for the Englishmen by seven wickets. Prince Ranjitsinhji did especially well with his bat, not out, and the result must have given a little additional *éclat* to Mr. McLaren's wedding, celebrated two days later.

The Fisheries' Exhibition at the Westminster Aquarium is remarkably well worthy of a visit this year. There is the usual display of fishing and angling implements of all descriptions; these in themselves are "fully interesting," as a Scotch friend informed us; but even of greater interest are the fish hatcheries, in which the process is to be seen in all its stages, well carried out. We have often suggested in these notes that country folk who are fortunate enough to have a little trickle of water at their service might amuse themselves excellently by devoting it to the business of artificial trout-breeding. It is all so simple and so pretty and the results are so satisfactory, and they can scarcely have a better object lesson than is afforded them just now at the Aquarium. Altogether the exhibition has raised our respect for the Aquarium, never, of course, defective, more than a little. Hitherto there have been on exhibition there anything you please, from two-headed nightingales to champion strong men; now, although it is still called the Aquarium, there are fish.

There are fish in various stages of development, not only the familiar brown trout, but also the much less shy, the more gaudy, and more voracious rainbow trout; and for the catching of all these and others what devices are there. Most interesting of these devices, perhaps, is the new departure in the way of artificial water-boatmen, corixæ, and all that class, which certainly find their way into fishes' stomachs, but which have seldom been tried, in counterfeit, to lure them to the angler's hook. They ought to take; there are those that say they do, and yet it happened to the humble, but gentle (for all anglers are gentle) angler that writes to have made trial of a lure of this nature, fashioned according to the sample, reputed deadly, lent by a friend, with the sole result of wasting an hour or two on trout that were subsequently found to be in taking mood with the fly, but paid no attention whatsoever to the corixæ. Not that this proves anything. The caprice of fish is unfathomable. At that moment their caprice said "fly," at another it might say "water-boatmen"—*varium et mutabile semper, salmo fario*.

On the whole the early spring salmon fishing has been above the average. Certainly it has been good in Ireland—have we not good accounts of the Blackwater, and has not a forty-one-pounder been taken out of the Shannon? In the North of Scotland, and in the West of England, sport has been good too. The South of Scotland and the Border streams have been exceptionally unfortunate, but for a while they were very poorly off for water, which has been fairly abundant elsewhere. Yet we cannot but think that fishermen, as well as others, are generally going to suffer during the forthcoming season from the compara-

tive drought which has been our fortune for the last two years, and which the present shows no sign of mending. There have been rains, and a certain amount of snow, but no really heavy or constant fall of either, such as stocks the fountains from which the rivers draw their replenishment in the summer. Still, generally speaking, we have had water enough both for our salmon and our trout angling, even with occasional interruptions by reason of "snow broth," but for the future we have no confidence. It is something that the salmon are evidently about. There have been years when we feared that they meant never to visit our shores again.

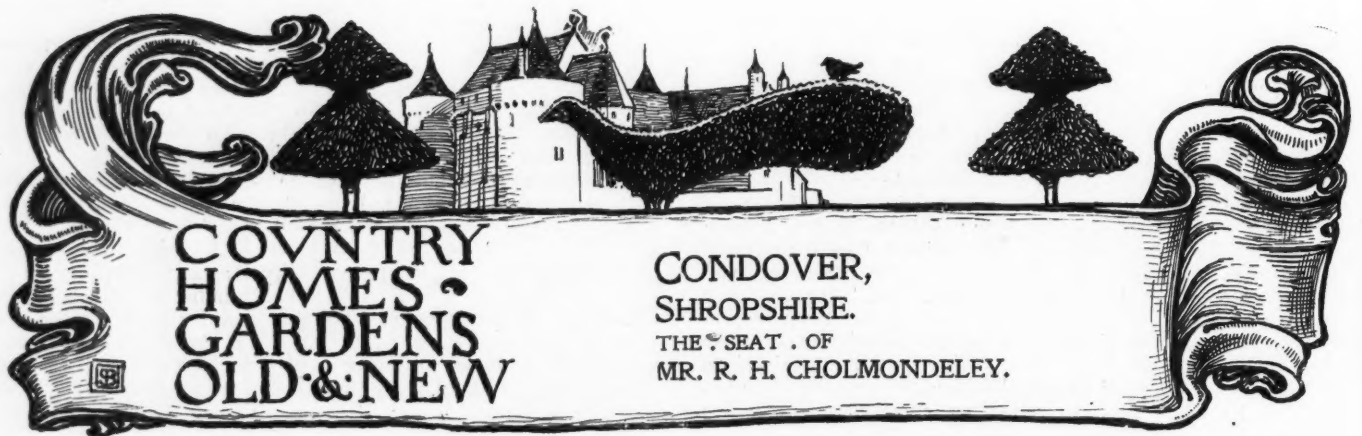
There is an account to hand of yet another big pike caught in a private Broad in Norfolk. The number of pike between twenty and thirty pounds' weight—and we seem to have a memory of a thirty-pounder taken in the Arun—make this year quite a notable one in the annals of piking. It is a record not to be scanned without fear. Already in these columns we have drawn notice to this general increase of pike. Just now fishing is a fashion. Every owner of a respectable brook is turning in young trout to stock it, which young trout naturally do not stay there, but spread themselves over all the rivers in the land. It may be that the increase of the pike is the effect of, as it certainly seems proportionate to, the increase of the fish that form their food. Unfortunately, the eaters have a way of increasing at a rate that is more than equalled by the rate of increase of the eaten. While trout and pike both continue to increase, well and good, even though with the expense of some artificial culture of the former; but if the pike become too numerous, the proportions will soon be in inverse ratio—pike increasing, trout diminishing—and that is not precisely what the modern angler wants.

Almost equally with pike an enemy of trout, and often little suspected, are big perch. The eagerness with which they will snap up a phantom or a Devon minnow is proof positive enough, without any autopsy, of their cannibal appetites. In many a pond and lake where the owner is lamenting the apparent loss of all the young Loch Levens that he has lately turned into it, an interview with a few of the big perch, with a dissecting-knife acting as interpreter, might likely enough tell the tale of their disappearance. And there is no way that we know of for ridding a pond of its perch except the wholesale one of draining it and taking out the fish.

Mr. Wilson H. Armistead, of the Solway Fishery, Dumfries, N.B., has commenced operations in Ireland, having taken an admirably suitable place for the establishment of fish hatcheries on the River Dee, County Louth. Ireland should be an excellent field, and with such a thoroughly practical knowledge of the work, Mr. Armistead is certain to make his "hatchery" a success. The advantages to Irish fishing which may be gained by the proper stocking of Erin's lovely lakes and rivers cannot be over-estimated. This stocking must be carried out judiciously, however, and this is where the advantage of having an expert to give advice comes in. It is necessary to know what is the cause of the scarcity of fish in a stream before trying to populate it, and this can only be discovered by one who has made the science of fish culture a study.

Mr. George Raper, who has lately returned from the New York show of the Westminster Kennel Club, declares that in many sporting breeds, notably pointers and spaniels, Americans are slowly ousting English breeders from the position they have held for so many years. All the winning strains are, of course, imported, but it is somewhat of a reflection on British dog men that foreigners have, by devoting great attention to working characteristics, and discarding the cultivation of many questionable show points, succeeded in rearing animals the like of which cannot now be found in any part of Britain. Were breeders to devote more time to the improvement of varieties essentially English, and pay less attention to foreign monstrosities—many of which are clearly mongrels—we should not be met with the reproach of an English judge who declares that he saw far better pointers in America than ever he met with in this country. Mr. Raper has been invited to return for the San Francisco show in May.

A correspondent writes, "Sauntering the other day through the beautiful grounds of Jesmond Dene House, the habitation of Sir Andrew Noble, I came across an ancient quarry mantled with ivy. As I approached, first one and then another stock-dove rose from the ivy. Doubtless their nests might be found in the clefts of the rock, but they are safe where they are. It is always well to keep a sharp look-out for the stock-doves. My own impression is that they occur less rarely than is commonly believed. Certainly I know quite a large number of places in which they breed habitually, and, although when one looks closely, they are not really very like wood-pigeons, I expect many of them go undetected."



FEW counties in England can boast so many fine seats and families of ancient lineage as Shropshire. Go where you will, some old castle or castellated fragment, some mansion of early time, some example of the timber structures which were so notable a feature of Middle England, or some stout dwelling-place of stone, will attract your attention; and if you enquire, you are as likely as not to find your village resting-place well filled with history. Condoover, which, with its somewhat formal garden, is illustrated in these pages, is a very typical house of Tudor times. COUNTRY LIFE has depicted not a few such, so that its readers are now able to group together our great country homes according to their age and character. They will discover, in the main front of Condoover, no small resemblance to Charlecote in Warwickshire, where the old Knight dwelt whom Shakespeare satirised for all time as Justice Shallow. There is the same central block, with its gables and projecting porch; on each side project the same wings, with similar windows, cresting, and chimneys; the grouping is thus about like a hollow square, and the front, if you include the porch, is somewhat upon the plan of a letter E. It is certainly a massing of structure that lends itself exceedingly well to the best effects of light and shade, to the artistic picturesqueness of sky-line, and to all those features which we are wont to associate with Tudor and Jacobean times. As we know, there are solid comforts within such goodly dwelling-places as this. If you look, too, at the other side of Condoover, you will remark a species of corridor or arcade, which will not fail to remind you in some degree of Hatfield. The park at Condoover is one of rich

umbrageous beauties and broad green expanses. It offers a marked contrast, indeed, to the formal garden that is depicted here.

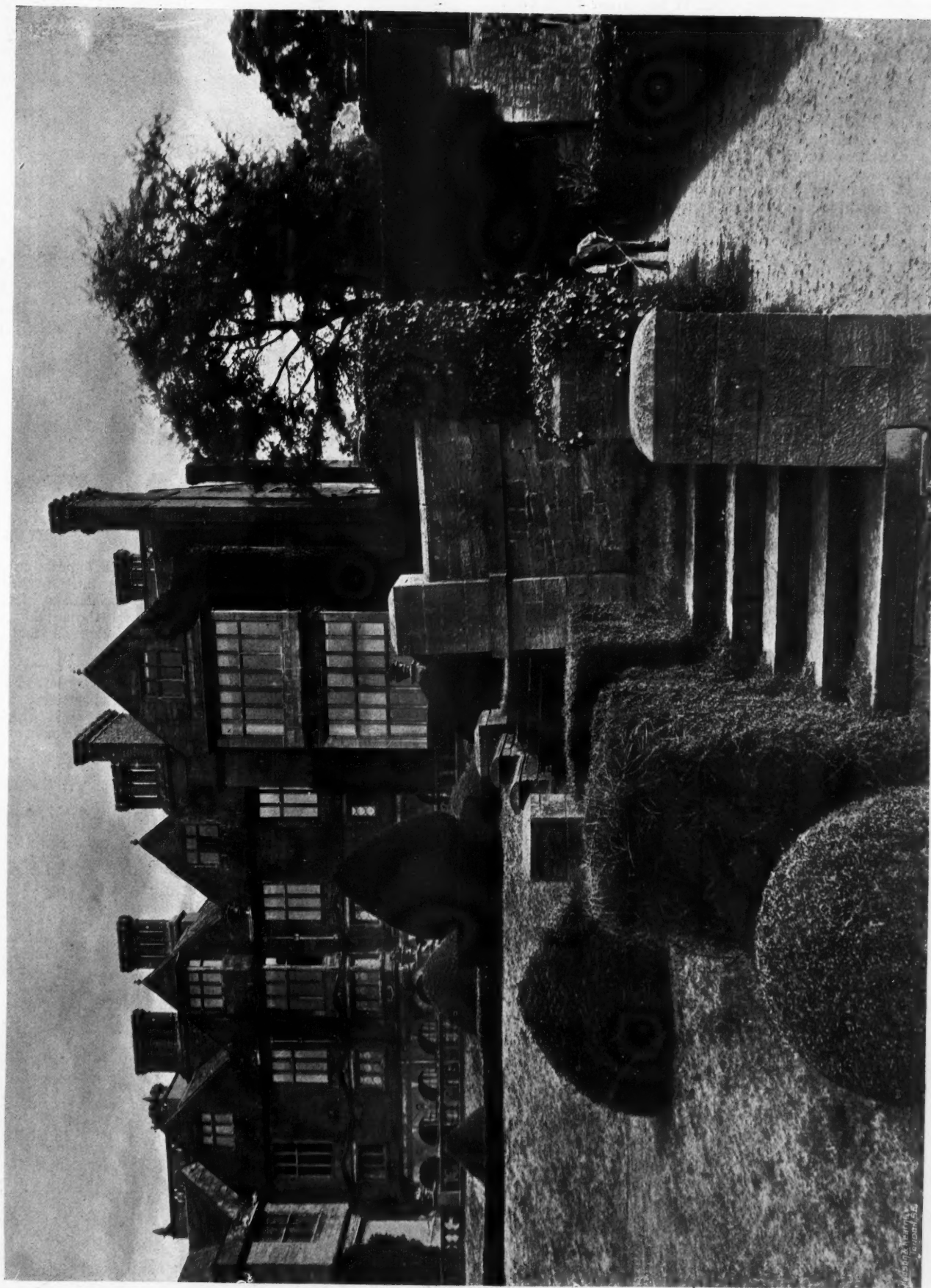
The rival schools of gardening—the natural and artificial—have had many a battleground, but we think the conflict has not waged fiercely, and will not, over the delights of old Condoover. Here certainly is nothing of the extremely fantastic, such as you will find at Levens and Elvaston, but merely the cutting of trees to prim forms, analogous to beehives and cylinders, and the natural life of the garden is not blighted, as it were, by the neighbourhood of arboreal monstrosities.

But before we enter the garden, let us say something about the spacious and beautiful house. What manner of dwelling was here when the Parliament of Edward I. sat at Acton Burnell hard by—the nobles in the castle, and the commons in a barn—to pass the famous “Statutum de Mercatoribus,” we do not know. The estate was purchased in the reign of Henry VIII. by Thomas Owen, who appears to have built the house itself in or about 1598, to be completed by his son. Camden says of him that he was “a great lover of learning, who, being dead, left behind him a son, Sir Roger, an excellent scholar, and worthy of so excellent a father.” Thomas Owen was a native of Condoover, and a gentleman of the law, who rose to be Queen’s Sergeant in 1593, and a Justice of the Common Pleas in the following year. He died in 1598, and is buried in Westminster Abbey, where his fine monument may be seen.

Sir William Owen of Condoover was a wary gentleman in







"COUNTRY LIFE"

GARDENS OLD AND NEW: CONDOVER PARK; ANCIENT STEPS.

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the Civil Wars, who contrived, with a certain agility, to be now on one side of the hedge and now on the other. He was in the Commission of Array, at least, and signed certain warrants, being a supporter of the King, and was in a position of authority at the council house in Shrewsbury. The Parliament Committee afterwards averred in his favour that, when they first "took footing" in the country, and were in the poorest condition, penned up in the garrison of Wem, and there surrounded by the enemy, he held correspondence with them, and offered them possession of his house at Conover, "being a strong stone building within three miles' distance of Shrewsbury." Though they were not in a position to garrison it, the circumstance led them to the conclusion that his "affections were always right towards the cause of the public," and if he ever acted otherwise this could scarcely proceed from disaffection, but rather "from some passion of timorousness, or the facility of his nature." Not content with this plea in Sir William's favour, the Parliament party asserted that, after the taking of Shrewsbury, he had manifested the best dispositions towards their cause, while his backwardness in contributing mortgages or yielding assistance to the Royalists caused them to threaten to burn his house.

Happily for himself, Sir William Owen's prudent carefulness, answering in this matter better than headlong zeal, enabled him to save his purse and estate, while stauncher men had bowed beneath the stroke. Fortunately for us, too, his noble mansion escaped the fury of the Royalists he had disappointed, and still survives among the most beautiful houses in the land. The Owens continued to live at Conover for many years after that critical period in the fortunes of their house, until by marriage the mansion and estate passed to the ancient family of Cholmondeley, with which it still remains. In Conover Church there is a monument of Roger Owen, 1717, by Roubilliac, and a recumbent effigy of his wife and child, as well as a kneeling figure of Mr. Cholmondeley-Owen, these last being from the hand of Mr. Reginald Cholmondeley.

It has been the very good fortune of this house and estate to remain in the hands of those who have loved it, and to be cherished and maintained as such a house deserves to be. Within, it is beautiful, spacious, and abundantly interesting, though not to be described here. Fine panelling, rich ceilings and mantels, old portraits, and plenishings of the richest kind, add to its old-world charm. You may see, indeed, from the picture of the hall what manner of place it is; that quaint and curious mantel bespeaks the features of much of the rest. There is, too, as a point of interest to be noticed, the fantastic conception of Elizabeth in the character of the "Queen of Hearts." In this connection it may not be out of place to recall that the hopeful inhabitants of Hainault did, indeed, in the year before the Armada, depict her on a medal as Venus assuaging the fury of Mars, who, in the person of Philip of Spain, threatened to



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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

descend destructively upon them. Elizabeth appears appropriately at Conover, as representing the time in which the house was reared. There is appropriateness also in the semi-formality of the gardens. Even those who turn to the natural beauties of a later day concede that, in the neighbourhood of a house like this, some reminiscence of the gardening style of its prime should suitably be maintained. And we shall see in another article—for Conover Hall and its history have occupied us enough to-day—how charmingly diversified and beautiful are the gardens and terraces amid which it lies, the general character whereof the pictures will meanwhile in part disclose.



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THE TERRACES.

"COUNTRY LIFE"





## "The Liars."

THERE is no sign of failing powers in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's play at the Criterion Theatre; and, as people seem to be as interested as ever in that curious work, it is not too late to devote this article to it, because it has not yet been dealt with in these columns, because it is the most fashionable entertainment in town, and because—but this is a secret—there is nothing else to write about.

To begin at the beginning, is not the name a horrible one? Mr. Jones's original intention was to christen his play "The Triflers," a much more appropriate title considering the scope of the piece, but a much less sensational one, and discarded presumably for that reason. "The Liars" smacks of old comedy in its name and in its kind, though it is naturally tempered by the chastened manners of the time. This, of course, is as it should be, for "The Liars," like its antique prototypes, is essentially a comedy of manners. In plot it is lamentably deficient, and what plot there is is as old as the hills. It is in its treatment that it shines, in its treatment, that is, of language; for in its characterisation there is nothing that is novel. Even its central figure is very little different from others recently played by Mr. Charles Wyndham—this great actor has once again to impersonate a "squire of dames," a man-of-the-world whose mission it is to put everything right for everybody, to smooth the rough paths of flirty wives, jealous husbands, and the rest of the people reintroduced to us by the same author in "The Case of Rebellious Susan," in Mr. Carton's recent adaptation from the French, and in other productions of late years at the same playhouse. If it were not for the absolutely perfect representation of the play, I doubt whether it would have enjoyed more than the most moderate success. But Mr. Jones, in addition to being a very clever artist, is also a very shrewd business man. He found that Mr. Wyndham, as a good angel of middle age, was a most attractive figure to playgoers, and he set out, therefore, to give him another opportunity of providing an article for which there is such a steady demand.

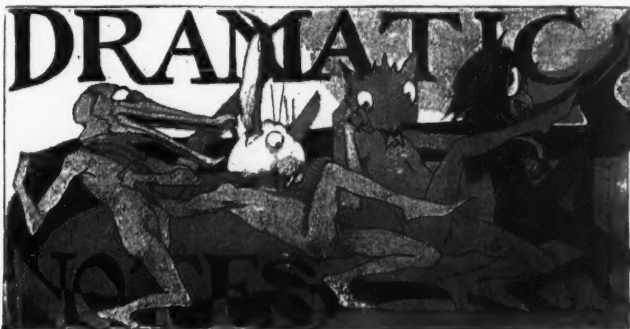
Really, what a lot of uninteresting folk are these "smart" men and women, these neurotic creatures who have all the inclination to be thoroughly vicious, but not the pluck; who are restrained from no self-indulgence or wrong-doing by any such antiquated thing as conscience or morality, only by the fear of being cut by their "set." If this be modern English "society," heaven save us from it. But, of course, it is nothing of the sort. It is shoddy, shoddy, shoddy. The play has a pernicious influence, too; for while "society" goes and laughs at the Brummagen imitation provided by Mr. Jones, the others, the pit and the gallery, believe all of it, and go away thinking that it is all very nice and lively, and that, to be better than their neighbours, they have only to talk loosely and behave as badly as they dare; this is the only moral Mr. Jones has to teach—Mr. Jones, who preaches so often on the high mission of the Stage and the need of dramatists to elevate the Drama.

Nor is "The Liars" a good piece of work even from the mere craftsman's point of view. The manner in which everyone happens without reason to drop in at the little river-side hotel is worthy only of melodrama, in which probability is always sacrificed to the needs of the story. Another fault, from this point of view, is that the action does not progress; the end is a cul-de-sac, nothing is arrived at save the blank wall with which the play begins. The giddy, invertebrate wife, longing always for meretricious excitement of a rather fast kind, with her love for a good dinner, for flirtation, for everything that we are asked to believe the modern woman of good birth hungers for—a palpable libel on her order—the butterfly wife, at the end of the play just returns unwillingly to the bondage from which she is trying to get free when the curtain first rises; there is no ground for believing that she will not "fall in love" with the next man she meets who offers her a meal at a restaurant, there is nothing to lead us to hope that the boorish husband will moderate his language or become less of a cad. Everything points to things going on in the same sweet way. No wonder, when we leave

the theatre, that there is a feeling of absolute emptiness, a mental vacuum, a vague haziness as to what it is all about. We have been seeing the troubles of an abnormal set of people, the people of the penny "society" papers. The heroine has been on the brink of running away with a distinguished soldier who is prepared to sacrifice career and duty for her sake, both of them being saved from what they would term a *faux pas* only because they fear being barred from respectable houses. No wonder we feel a void.

There is not a striking figure on the stage save that personified by Mr. Wyndham, nor one in whom we can feel the slightest sympathy, save him and the good woman he loves, a small part exquisitely played by Miss Cynthia Brooke, a young actress who will one day go far, if I mistake not. Her performances in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" and "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith" in the country marked her out as one possessing great capabilities, and her playing in "The Liars" shows that she has style and finish, too. Of Mr. Wyndham and the others so much has been said that it were supererogatory to say more. The high praise bestowed on them in so many quarters is thoroughly deserved. At the Criterion Theatre we see what is probably the most perfect acting on our stage. There is not a flaw anywhere.

B. L.



THE benefit to Miss Nellie Farren having been given, there is now some hope that the Chinese Crisis, the American war-thirst, and the West African imbroglio will receive adequate attention in the Press. I do not propose to add my sum of more to that which has had quite enough, but will merely remark that it was the most remarkable theatrical event of our time.

If a vote were taken among London playgoers, who would be chosen as the ideal D'Artagnan of "The Three Musketeers"? The death of Mr. Terriss took from us the one most physically and temperamentally suited to the character of this slightly swashbuckling, impudent, courageous hero of Dumas; and, had he lived, we should in all probability have seen this, the handsomest actor of the generation, in a part peculiarly suited to him. But of the living, who is the ideal? Mr. Lewis Waller has the appearance and many other qualifications for a fine, robust D'Artagnan, but has he quite the lightness of touch, the debonair manner of the D'Artagnan of our imaginations? Mr. Tree has these latter qualities, but has he the physical attributes of the part? I do not mean the outward seeming, for Mr. Tree is the greatest master of "make-up" that we have; but has he the strength, the vigour, for this chevalier? We shall very probably have the opportunity of judging, for both gentlemen have announced their intention of presenting a stage version of the romance; it will be very interesting to compare their different readings of the character.

When are we to see Miss Lena Ashwell in a play containing a character suited to her wonderful personality? It is the opinion of the experts, you know, that in Miss Ashwell we have one of the actresses of the future; that she possesses a method unique in its expression of emotion without visible effort; that she is, perhaps, the most absolutely natural actress the English stage can boast. I wonder if this view of the masculine experts is also the view of the average feminine playgoer. It would be interesting to know, for in the hands of the average feminine playgoer the reputation of plays and players rests. The mere males do not count; they are dragged to the theatre by their women-kind. At least, that is the superstition of the theatrical manager, whose first question always is. Is it a woman's play? Miss Ashwell has not had a real chance yet of showing all that is in her; we shall be very disappointed if, when her opportunity comes, she does not realise our hopes—and those hopes are high.

Somebody asked the other day why it was that dramatists were making their heroes and heroines middle-aged, and sought to find a reason for the fact that the young and gallant heroes and the girlish heroines were giving place to people past their first youth. All sorts of abstruse explanations were given; it was the spirit of the time, or the glamour of autumn tints, or something of that

interesting but somewhat far-fetched description. The real cause, I venture to think, is nothing so nice. It arises from the fact that most of our popular actor-managers and actress-manageresses—the people for whom plays are written—are, alas! themselves growing older, that it is no longer possible for them to give *vraisemblance* to sweet seventeen and dashing one-and twenty. That is the simple reason of it all; less romantic than the others, I admit, but ever so much more likely. Wait until the next generation comes fully into its own, then we shall see blooming maidenhood and beardless youth again in possession.

When Mr. and Mrs. Kendal reappear at the St. James's Theatre we shall see them in a play the subject of which is the most powerful of all, the love of a mother for her son. The piece, from the pen of that clever man of law, Mr. Walter Frith, is called "Not Wisely but Too Well," and it shows the trials of a deserted woman, tricked by that prolific source of dramatic matrimonial infelicity, the Scots marriage laws. The central figure is no less a personage than a Premier of the country, whose wife, married years ago in Scotland, has so schemed it that her son, of whose existence the great statesman is unaware, becomes his father's secretary, though he, too, is ignorant of his parentage. How intense matters become may be imagined when it is said that the Duke of Ayrshire—that is the title of the Prime Minister—is about to marry a high-born lady, to enter, in fact, into a great political alliance with the representative of one of the ruling families. The part of the mother should offer fine opportunities to Mrs. Kendal, bringing into play her wonderful power of expressing the most poignant of emotions.

Miss Nellie Thorne, the young actress who is playing the heroine of "A Bachelor's Romance" at the Globe Theatre, by her simplicity, her girlishness, her sympathetic manner, went near to taking London by storm when first she made her appearance among us in this play, and we congratulated Mr. Hare on his discovery. Miss Thorne owes much to her charm of personality; she has yet something to learn of technique, though it is to be hoped that experience will not cause her to lose any of that naturalness and freshness that at present make her performance so delightful. Miss Thorne has secured a position in the metropolis in one bound; we shall be anxious to observe her in another character, for then we shall hope to see, what we all expect to see, that she has versatility as well as youth.



Photo, A. Ellis, MISS NELLIE THORNE. Upper Baker St.

There are not a great number of playgoers who will remember Mr. Charles Wyndham, for very many years the most popular actor on our stage, a proud position he holds till to-day, as the gay *farceur*, the irresistible hero of the mirth-provoking "Fourteen Days," "Brighton," "The Candidate," and many other works of a similarly frivolous and hilarious kind. But it was in these that his great reputation was made. Then he grew more and more serious, till "David Garrick" put its seal on his fame as a sentimental actor—"David Garrick," which is still the most attractive piece in his repertoire. Since then Mr. Wyndham has never gone back. And now it is believed that we are to see a further development; to see Mr. Wyndham in a work that is closely akin to tragedy, with a very serious *dénouement* indeed, where one of the characters dies, no less a one, if I mistake not, than him represented by Mr. Wyndham himself. Mr. Wyndham has always been an appealing figure; dying gracefully, and heroes never die otherwise, he will be more appealing than ever.

Once more the pretty little Métropole Theatre at Camberwell is to be the scene of a somewhat important "first night," for here it is that Mr. George Bancroft, the son of Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft, will produce his new tragedy,

which may, or may not, be called "Terésia," in which Miss Violet Vanbrugh, of whom we have seen far too little of late, is to appear as the heroine, and her husband, Mr. Arthur Bouchier, as the hero. The scene is laid in modern Italy. It is pleasant to find the sprigs of the famous old theatrical trees sprouting so vigorously. Sir Henry Irving and Sir Squire Bancroft should be proud of their sons, for even if success does not attend their first efforts, energy and ambition will probably give the necessary impetus before very long.

What are the ladies going to do about the "matinée hat," which threatens to rival the Eastern Question and the Cuban Crisis as matters of international import? Like woman's suffrage, it is but a variation of the Eternal Feminine. Mr. George Alexander has placarded his theatre with polite, though somewhat satirical, requests for the removal of the offending headgear; and really, when one comes to think of it, huge plumes are not the best med' a through which to watch a play. But it is the bother of holding one's hat in one's hand, or waiting in a crush outside the cloak-room, that prevent reform. Will not some great lady make it the fashion to attend the theatres in closely-fitting caps? I am sure they might be made most coquettish.



It does not often happen that your "Looker-on" lays hands upon the *Saturday Review*. He admired it in the old days of Mr. Walter Pollock and Mr.

George Saintsbury, when the first-named steered the vessel and wrote with great skill of drama and diabolism and of fencing, and as long as he lives the memory of the epitaphic review of the poems of Sir Lewis Morris will be with him. Of late it has seemed to him that the *Saturday* devoted undue attention to finance, a subject tedious to most men and intolerable to those who have no money to invest. Therefore it has been the more pleasant, on picking up the favourite review of other days, to find in it the first of a series of literary articles of real interest and merit. Their author is "F. H."—presumably that very versatile person, Mr. Frank Harris, the editor—and the subject of the first article is the study of the evolution of Hamlet, not in "Hamlet," but in Shakespeare's brain as illustrated by other plays. Mr. Harris probably does not desire to be taken quite seriously when he treats Romeo and Jaques as the forerunners of Hamlet, preliminary studies, so to speak, made with a view to the later masterpiece. He wishes rather, I take it, to set up a central theory more or less imaginative in quality, and round that central theory to write with graceful learning and brilliant fancy. He certainly succeeds; and the first article is eminently worth reading.

Even in *Literature* also there is promise, though the English honesty of the editor compels him to acknowledge errors in printing which illustrate the danger of omniscience. Thus it was very awkward when no less an one than the great Mr. Smalley himself had written of three of America's most eminent sons of letters that they had "kept their place for a generation," that the printer should print "have left their place." But *Literature* has promise notwithstanding. It contains an article on the length of novels by Mr. G. H. Powell which is eminently worth reading, and it holds forth a prospect of genuine enjoyment in the shape of a series of articles by Mr. Henry James on American literature. One might wish, of course, that there were more in the subject; but one could not desire a better man to write upon it.

I am among the heretics who think that, on the whole, publishers are an honest and appreciative class of men, and that authors, take them as a body, get at least as much profit as they ought to get, and grumble far more than circumstances warrant. By way of illustrating my statement, I quote some facts concerning Mr. I. Zangwill's "Dreamers of the Ghetto." I do not say that Mr. Zangwill grumbles, be it observed. The odds are that, since he writes well, he is content with his lot; but the proceedings in relation to his new book certainly serve to exemplify the very great care that is taken in these days to safeguard the rights of authors, and to place their works upon the market to the greatest advantage. No less than seven separate editions of his novel are being brought out simultaneously in different parts of the world. From such careful organisation of the machinery of distribution of books in many countries result, no doubt, additional profits (or losses) to publishers as well as to authors; but it is pretty plain that the extra trouble is all borne by the publishers.

Has the fury of the French people in general, and of Paris in particular, in connection with M. Zola's defence of Dreyfus militated against the sale of his "Paris"? It is an interesting question when we reflect that, if an analogous episode had occurred in England, the book written by the object of popular rage would certainly have sold like wild-fire. Nor, apparently, is it impossible to answer it; 68,000 copies were, it is written, "bespoken"—I confess I thought this word was the property of the bootmaker and tailor—before publication; 10,000 of these orders, however, were cancelled in Paris. *Contra*, perfidious Allion increased her orders by 15,000. So M. Zola will have extra monies lying at interest while he languishes in durance vile. But of course one cannot tell how the subsequent sale of the book may have been affected.

I am writing away from home, and the name of the collatorator with Mr. C. L. Graves in "The War of the Wenuses" (Arrowsmith, Bristol) has escaped me. But of the skit I hasten to say that it deserves to rank side by side with Mr. Burnand's immortal "Strapmore." "Strathmore," however, was a better subject, and infinitely more powerful work, with all its exaggerations and absurdities, than this laboured "War of the Worlds."

A very useful book which Messrs. Blackwood will shortly publish is the "Young Estate Manager's Guide," written by a thoroughly practical man, Mr. Richard Henderson. It will treat of all matters which it is indispensable that the estate agent should know, and it will have the additional advantage of an introduction by Professor Wright.

A hunting song entitled "The View-Hol'oa" has been handed to your "Looker-on." The words and music are by Mr. A. F. Turner of Bideford. The former strike me as being well above the average of their kind; the latter is founded on Mendelssohn's Lied "The Chase." Of this kind of song the healthy sportsman who knows more of "counters" than of counterpoint is just as good a judge as the expert musician, and I can say of this piece that it has rattling spirit



and melody, which are precisely the qualities needed for a hunting song and chorus.

New publications that should by no means be missed are the *Ladies' Field*, admirable alike in matter, in pictures, and in equipment, and the *Wide World*, a most happily-named magazine, with beautiful illustrations and of wonderfully varied character. Both are issued by Messrs. Newnes.

Books to order from the library:—

- "Dreamers of the Ghetto." I. Zangwill. (Heinemann.)
- "A Son of Israel." Rachel Penn. (Macqueen.)
- "A Strange Sin." Coulson Kernahan. (Ward, Lock.)
- "Sentimental Education." G. Flaubert. Translated by D. F. Hannigan. (Nichols.)
- "Her Wild Oats." John Bickerdyke. (Burleigh.)
- "King Arthur and the Round Table." William Wells Newell. (Houghton, Mifflin.)
- "Audubon and his Journals." Maria Audubon. (Nimmo.)
- "Sport in the Highlands of Kashmir." H. Z. Darrah. (Longmans.)

LOOKER-ON.



F. Mason Gould.

A COUNTRY LANE.

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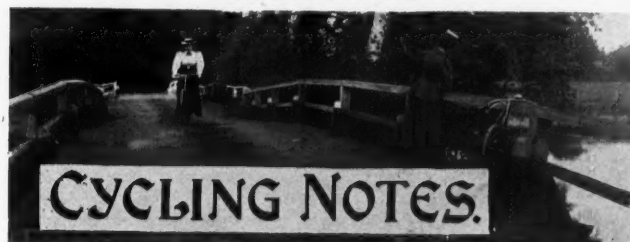
## The Eve of the Inter-University Sports.

THERE is nothing quite so unsafe to prophesy about, even at the last moment, as the inter-University sports. Men are even more untrustworthy than horses, and times are very little test. Some runners are good racers and some are not; for racing against a man and racing against old Time are very different things. There was one famous year when every single event at Lillie Bridge went contrary to the record of previous performances, the most sensational race of all being in the mile, in which the famous La Touche was just defeated by Pratt of St. John's, who finished some 10sec. quicker than ever before in his life. Paper performances must be then taken for what they are worth; a truer criterion will be found in the style and power of the men themselves, without any special reference to the times attributed by fallible figures. There should be some fine races, though unfortunately the longer distances appear likely to be the least well contested. In the three-mile Oxford, maintaining an old-time precedent, have an immense superiority. It is natural to put faith in a tried hand, and Fremantle has not only a sum of past victories to his credit, but runs with such beautiful ease and confidence that no doubt can be entertained of a repetition of his successes. He will have to meet Workman, a plucky but somewhat ungrainy runner, who earned some reputation as an athlete even before he went up to Cambridge. However, as he is a freshman, it is probable that he will account for several inter-Varsity events before he is done with. Hunter, the Cambridge miler, is also a freshman, and both from style and performance may be expected to turn out one of the best runners either University has had. His time—4min. 26sec.—was exceptional; he also finished very fresh and full of running, and has improved "by leaps and bounds" in every fresh race. Certainly he ought to have no difficulty with either Deakin or Danson, though both are older hands. In the quarter again, Carter, the Cambridge president, will hardly find anyone to extend him. He is the very type of a quarter-miler, and seems to have caught from FitzHerbert, his first string of last year, that peculiar long, raking stride which is a first necessity in this above all other races. It is true that he was beaten the other

day at Cambridge by his own second string, but only for the reason that a sprained ankle had prevented the preliminary stages of his training. With the high jump, in which the long and light Adair of Christ Church may be expected to clear 5ft. 10in., the list of "certainties" is complete, each University claiming two.

In the five events that remain, the results lie "on the knees of the gods," though undoubtedly on paper Oxford have the odds in their favour. In that quaint amusement styled "throwing the hammer," Crossley of Trinity, Oxford, has reached 104ft., a good throw for these degenerate days, while Bullock has generally thrown about 10ft. less; he has also up to date shown himself inferior by about 2ft. to Swanston, the Oxford "putter." The inferiority, however, is only on paper, as Bullock has but lately recovered from an attack of influenza, and with any luck will be immensely improved; nor are his two opponents very sound performers. He is a bold man who has any confidence in predicting the result of the long jump. Towards the end eighties, Oxford claimed an absolute certainty in this event for three consecutive years, but on each occasion her representatives jumped up to as much as 3ft. short of previous performances. Again more recently, Fry was beaten by Mendelson, though as a freshman he had won with the record leap of 23ft. 5in. Still Vassall, who has just been elected captain of football at Oxford, won with a good jump last year, and is not wont to suffer from the cramp of nervousness. If the event was not a long jump his victory would be expected with confidence.

The two great races of the day should be the hundred yards and the hurdles. Never was a race more open than is the sprint, nor more likely to result in a good time. Thomas, who hails from Oxford and the Principality, comes first in reputation, but he only managed to tie last year with the Cambridge president, while this year, oddly enough, both he and Carter have been beaten by their second strings. So far as a single opinion is of value amid such conflicting evidence, Harrison, of Jesus, Cambridge, seems just now the best of the four, though Thomas should win if he happens to be at the top of his form on the 25th. In the hurdles most people will expect Maundrell to win on the strength of two recent races, the second in the late meeting between Cambridge and the London Athletic Club. In each he was timed to have covered the distance in "a yard better than 16 1-5sec." He is, of course, a fine and consistent hurdler, but the course at Fenners is very appreciably down hill, and only those who have run (or ridden a bicycle) know the amount of difference caused by the smallest gradient. He has also in Garnier an exceptional opponent, who has already accounted for the race in the past two years. Garnier's skill is a curious instance of the force of heredity, as his father twice won the same race in almost exactly the same time in the sports of 1871 and 1872. Oxford will certainly start as strong favourites at Queen's Club, but the odds can never be very long in a case where a bad start, or a topped hurdle, or a touch of nervousness may make all the difference between victory and defeat.



THE annual meeting of the Cyclists' Touring Club last Friday was a very successful affair, and could boast a record attendance of nearly 500 members. Those present had, of course, along with the absent ones also, every reason to congratulate themselves on the prosperity of their organisation, with its immense muster-roll and its substantial reserve of funds. The meeting, it may be noted, expressed a very emphatic support of the policy of the council during the past few months, and also made short work of a proposal to reduce the subscription from five shillings to four. One of the speakers clinched the matter at the close of his harangue by asking, "Are you people who buy twenty-guinea bicycles going to worry about saving a shilling a year?" However, there was no need to argue the point very far, for the decision of the council to present the invaluable Handbook to the members this year is equivalent to the immediate return of two-fifths of the subscription, and the postage on the Club Gazette appropriates another shilling, so that not much is left after these disbursements. The only unsatisfactory feature of the meeting was the inability of the council to express any definite hope of the Universal Lights Bill being passed this session. In private members' hands it is subject to the vicissitudes of the ballot, and there is no hope of its becoming a Government measure, albeit certain members of the Government are in its favour.

Mention of the Universal Lights Bill recalls a curious happening that befel a well-known Manchester barrister the other day. He had attended a meeting in that city, and eloquently advocated the desirability of compelling other vehicles besides bicycles to carry lights at night; in fact, he moved a resolution to that effect. Returning home a wheel after he left the meeting, he found himself pulled up by a constable, who pointed out that the lamp on the cycle had become extinguished. The policeman would accept as no extenuation the fact that the light had only jolted out a moment before, and the barrister was summoned and fined. Of course, he has been the recipient of considerable chaff upon the incident, which is one of the most amusing cases of being "hoist with his own petard" on record. None the less is the gentleman in question anxious for it to be known that the extinction of his light was purely accidental, and that his views on the subject of compulsory lighting remain unchanged.

The assize and county courts have again been occupied pretty fully of late with cycling cases, and again the significant fact has to be recorded that the injuries caused by cyclists are overwhelmingly outnumbered by the injuries caused to cyclists by other road users. The complaints of that class of person who sets down indiscriminately as scorchers all types of wheelmen are becoming more conspicuously foolish and ill-founded every day. There has only been one case, of late, in which someone was injured by cycle riders, a woman having been run down by a tandem crew who rang their bell, but appear to have been going too fast to pull up in time when the woman did not get out of the way. On the other hand, cyclists have been obtaining verdicts all over the country. A rider at Prescott—that place of "hooking" notoriety—was run down by a couple of racing waggonettes, and at the Liverpool Assizes was awarded £125 in damages. The waggonettes, it should be noted, carried no lights. At

Brighton, a cyclist has been awarded £35 for being run down by a trap on the King's Road. At the Crewe County Court, a Stretford rider sued a Winsford publican to recover £16 for damage to a bicycle and personal injuries caused by a collision with defendant's trap, which came round the corner at a furious pace, and took so wide a radius that it passed at once to the wrong side of the road. The judge gave a verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount claimed and costs. In yet another case, the vice-chairman of the Coventry Board of Guardians, whose daughter had previously been awarded £50 damages for being knocked from her cycle, now sued for his own out of pocket expenses in the matter, and obtained them. Altogether it is agreeably clear that the day has gone by when a cyclist could not get justice in a court of law.

An "indignant" correspondent has painted a vivid picture of what he calls "the dangers of cycling in the busy streets of London." He says:—"The other afternoon I was driving along Victoria Street, with a friend, in a hansom. We had a steady driver. We caught sight of a lady bicyclist, right in the middle of the traffic. Carts to the right of her, carts to the left of her, carts to the front of her. Suddenly the cart in front of her slackened its speed, she did the same, and just at that moment we came up. I did not think she had a chance of escape, but our driver gave a desperate pull to the right, thereby locking his right wheel with the right wheel of the cart coming towards us, when both horses came down from the sudden check—the horse in our cab and the horse in the cart. They regained their footing after a struggle. But for our driver's presence of mind the lady must have been run over. As it was, she went gaily on, without knowing that she had put the occupants, drivers, and horses of two vehicles in jeopardy. and probably, on reaching home, said that she had ridden safely and easily through a crowded thoroughfare."

Unless the correspondent can furnish other data to justify his indignation he cannot be said to have made out anything but a poor case. *Prima facie* the cyclist was perfectly justified in maintaining her position in the stream of traffic, and the only person at fault was the driver of the correspondent's vehicle in being too close to allow for the contingency of the cyclist in front having suddenly to dismount as the result of a block ahead. It was definitely laid down in the City of London Court only three months ago that the driver of a carriage is to be held responsible if he goes too close behind a cycle; in fact, in the case referred to the injured cycle was a three-wheeler, a tradesman's cycle, to wit; and if it is necessary to be careful when behind a tricycle, how much more incumbent is it on a coachman to be careful when behind a bicycle, not self-balanced? I have never yet met a cyclist who did not do his best in crowded traffic to clear the way for the vehicle behind, and having cycled some thousands of miles on London streets, I may claim to speak with authority on this point; but it would be an intolerable state of affairs if the cyclist, when forced to stop along with other vehicles in consequence of the point policeman's injunction, were to be denied the right of protection from the vehicles behind.

THE PILGRIM.



THE best place to go when the ground is dry is the Vale of Aylesbury, and so when my budget to COUNTRY LIFE was posted last week I put myself on the train for Leighton Buzzard, where a hearty welcome and a horse for the morrow awaited me. Lord Rothschild's staghounds at the West Park Farm were my destination. This pack is no new sight to me, but it is always a pleasure to see them in the field or on the flags. Looking them over, you will note the combination of power and quality which is the distinguishing feature of this pack, and which makes them able not only to go the pace but to keep it up. The condition these hounds show, and which they need, is remarkable, for a hound needs to be as fit as a Grand National winner over this country. "You will find him a bit keen at first, but he is all right when once hounds settle to run," was the character my mount received from his owner. This means that for the first few fields my geography was at fault. I did not venture to carry out Whyte Melville's precept to ride "at" staghounds, but took up a position well clear of the pack and the crowd, and where, so far as I could see, there were three jumpable fences ahead. These observations I made during the time between the uncaring of the stag and the moment when hounds touched the line with a chime which sent my seed up into the air. The pace was good, luckily for me, and in the first two fields I was exactly in the position in which Mrs. Asquith once found herself on a strange horse. "I can't stop him," she said to the owner, who was galloping alongside. "Well, you don't want to, do you?" "But I can't steer him." "What does it matter; hounds are running straight," was the reply. The first two fences justified my judgment of their reasonable size, though we went at them much faster than at all accords with my theory of riding to hounds, which is slow at fences, fast in between. However, it was all right till the third came, when we landed with a scramble, nearly came down, picked ourselves up again, pecked a third time, and then went on safely. This restored the balance of power, and I was able to get nearer to hounds as they came to hunting over the plough. The patience of harriers and the drive of foxhounds kept us going, and yet they were always on the line of our quarry, and from the point where we jumped into the Cublington Road till Hollingdon was reached, nothing could be more enjoyable. The line from Stewkley to Hollingdon is stiff, and I made one of the many who came to grief. Hounds went so fast that men had to gallop over fences that required more circumspection than there was time to give. The stag then ran about a village unknown to me, and was taken soon after—a fine combination of genuine galloping and hunting; and so back home and to Melton for the Belvoir on Wednesday.

The Cottismore I missed, and my somewhat laconic stable companion tells me: "Found a mangy outlier near Orton Park Wood, and hunted him round and round Ranksboro till they killed him; hill country of course; poor scent; everybody you can think of there; this was bad." Mange has made its appearance in Leicestershire. I have a strong opinion as to how it got there, but it is no use talking about that now. However, strong measures will have to be taken.

Hard ground will bring the season to an end almost a week or ten days before its time, unless we get a moderate fall of rain. The Belvoir are already announced to stop, and will thus bring a very moderate season, so far as this historic pack is concerned, to a close. Yet I am not sure, as I look back, that writing about hunting does not rather pervert one's views of the sport enjoyed. There is much sound and excellent sport, many interesting runs, much good hound work, and much display of science and skill on the part of the huntsmen which are difficult to reproduce on paper. The run that lends itself best to description is one of those exciting gallops where length, pace, and point make every moment an anxiety as to how long you will be there to see what you desire to record. Lord Cowley entertained us all at Goadby Marwood Hall. The scent was not good, but, as usual, the hounds made the most of it, and I think every genuine sportsman enjoyed the hunt from Melton Spinney to Buntingly. In the present state of the ground it was not unpleasant to be able to see hounds without undue risk to one's horse.

There was but little sign of a closing season at Lodge-on-the-Wolds on Friday with the Quorn, except that I think some people were there who do not always go so far afield. There were foxes in plenty for a good day, but not enough for a day when hounds could not hunt a fox much further than they could see him. So economy in horseflesh being the order of the day, I came back, but they did nothing more.

On Wednesday, when the Southdown met at Short Gate, one of those mysterious and most unaccountable changes of scent took place, for during the early part of the day hounds could only hunt slowly in Laughton Wood, while in the afternoon a quite brilliant little gallop was brought off in the open, over a nice piece of country in the Chiddingfold district. No doubt scent was much better out of covert than in the woods, but I do not think this was the only reason for the good sport enjoyed after mid-day; it can rather, I believe, be attributed to hounds having a really straight-necked fox before them in the afternoon, and to getting away on good terms with him, while in the morning their quarry twisted and turned a great deal, and no doubt got a long way in front of the pack by the aid of these unsporting manoeuvres. Mr. Brand commenced by drawing those coverts which are in the immediate vicinity of the meet, but presently a view-holloa was heard some way off, near Ringmer brick-yard. Hounds, however, could not touch the line of this fox, which apparently had vanished into thin air. Mr. Brand then put his pack into Laughton Wood, and they did not draw far before getting a fox on foot. We soon arrived at the main ride, where a check occurred; hounds afterwards hunted slowly until they reached the south side of the wood. At this point they could own to the line no farther, so the Master, taking the little bitches in hand, cast them along the fields bordering on the road, but being unsuccessful he tried the Whitesmith Lane, and then put hounds once again into covert. They at once hit off the line, that of a fresh fox without doubt, for it took them out of covert on the same side that they entered it. Many of the field, unfortunately for themselves, kept straight on, which caused them to see no more of hounds that day, for the pack commenced to race away at once in an easterly direction by Holme's Hill, leaving Golden Cross a little to the right. The Cuckmere River was crossed a mile below Chiddingfold. With Gun Hill to the left the pack now ran on to Swansbrook Wood, where they had the satisfaction of eating their fox after a capital gallop, which lasted for the best part of an hour.

On Friday at Patcham, this being the nearest meet to Brighton, there was the usual crowd of horsemen, foot people, carriages, and the inevitable cyclists. The covert known as the Giles was drawn first, but as hounds did not find here, another piece of gorse a little further on was tried. Wadsley, who carried the horn, did not, however, succeed in getting a fox on foot until he reached a small patch of furze near the Dyke. Hounds, unfortunately, owing to a very bad scent, could make nothing of the line, and it was generally supposed that the fox had got to ground. Newtimber Holt proved blank, so a move was made to Park Wood, with the result that a fox was quickly found; he ran at first to Shaves Wood, and then back to where he was first roused. Subsequently the pack took a line out of covert, and ran on to the Downs, where they hunted on to the Giles; here they again found their fox, but, as they seemed to be able to do little with him, I left them at this point. X.

## ON THE GREEN.

THERE has been plenty worth noting done on the golf green since our last scribbling of notes. Two records have been famously broken, one in a manner that beats all record-breaking records. Braid has beaten his own record at Romford—a record of 70—by five strokes all at once. The record is now 65. It is prodigious—we had almost said it is not golf—that a man who has been playing over a green for years should suddenly do it in five strokes better than his previous best. This would be nothing if Braid were an eighteen handicap man—five strokes or so is nothing in that class—but it is an enormous margin in the select class that Braid stands so near the head of. Then Willie Fernie has beaten all records at Prestwick with a score of 70—a notable record, because so many good golfers and true have been playing their best over this classic course for so long.

Taylor is another of the professionals who have been showing brilliant form lately. In the first round of his match against Sherlock, the Oxford University Club's professional, he was round the Hincsey course in the splendid score of 69, which, we believe, ties Mr. J. L. Low's recently-made amateur record for the green. It was rather hard on Sherlock to catch his far more experienced opponent on such a "red-hot" game, and not altogether surprising that he was beaten by seven up and five to play. Taylor's performance in the second round was not quite up to the standard of his first, but he finished, nevertheless, in 70. Oxford University itself has a very useful side, as it demonstrated most recently in the match against a side of the Royal Ascot Club. The University won by a balance of twelve holes, though Mr. R. Mitchell made a most excellent start for the Club by gaining four holes from Mr. W. A. Henderson, the recently-elected captain for the year of the University team. Mr. R. A. H. Mitchell, the famous cricketing master of Eton, also gained a hole for the Royal Ascot, but, as usual, strength all down the list told for the University, which won as aforesaid.

Pau and Biarritz have been engaging in their annual competition for the Kilmaine Cup, decided by a home and home foursome match between a pair representing each club. This year the players on both sides were probably of stronger calibre than has ever been the case before. For Pau, Mr. Edward Blackwell and Mr. Charles Hutchings entered the lists, against Mr. Walter de Zoete and Mr. Eric Hambro, representing Biarritz. The latter should form a good combination, but the former are towers of strength, and in the end victory



was theirs by many holes. The result of this match decides the ultimate fate of the cup, which is now held in perpetual possession by Pau, the oldest golfing society, except the Blackheath and the Calcutta Clubs, south of the Tweed. The conditions were that the first club to win the cup twice successively should retain it, and this condition has been fulfilled by Pau's latest victory.

A new course for Essex county has lately been opened in that beautiful part of Epping Forest known as Nightingale Valley. James Braid has laid out the holes, and we may take that as a guarantee that the available ground has been used to the best possible advantage.

At Ashdown Forest, Mr. O. C. Bevan, playing from behind scratch, did excellently well in winning the Bogey competition for the Standen Cup. The course for this prize is twice round the links, and in his first round the winner did a great performance, standing no less than five up. Ultimately he finished with an advantage of two over Bogey.

## Notes on Partridge Driving at Holkham.

BY permission of the Earl of Leicester we are able to supplement the accounts published and illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE of January 15th and January 29th by figures giving the results of the twenty-two years in which partridge driving has been practised on this celebrated estate. The figures have an additional interest from the fact that previous to the introduction of driving, the partridge shooting at Holkham was considered to be as good as it could possibly be. Even in Norfolk no property had a longer and more celebrated record for this particular sport. Consequently, no such improvements could be looked for as that lately recorded as having taken place at Beaulieu, Lord Montagu's estate on the Solent, where the Hon. J. Scott-Montagu states that bags were raised from an average of 20 brace to 200 brace by the introduction of driving. Yet the Holkham shooting, previously reckoned to be as good as good could be, has been considerably improved, as the following figures show. They also indicate very clearly, what no young sportsman ever realises, how much depends on seasons; and that even on the best natural partridge ground an unfavourable summer may cause an appalling reduction in the stock of birds. *Per contra* the figures show how rapid is the recovery from bad seasons, though they do not show how far this was due to good management, or replacing stock.

The first partridge driving at Holkham was on January 8th, 1875, when thirteen guns, including H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, shot on the Branthill beat 382 partridges. The total number of birds killed during that season was 1,742. Since then the general practice has been to hold first three days', and later four days', driving, these days being consecutive, and usually towards the second week in December. The results are, perhaps, best seen in tabular form, with notes and explanations where needed. The total for the whole of each season is given on the right. It should be noted that this largely exceeds the bag made in the four big days' driving; but the estate is a very large one, and though each day's driving is held on a separate beat, there is a very considerable surplus area available for sport throughout the season.

Year.	SEASONS AT HOLKHAM.	Total for Season.
1875	First year in which driving was practised. One day, January 8th, 13 guns killed 382 partridges ... ..	1,742
1876	In this year there was no driving. The total for the season was or an increase of 575 birds above the previous year, which concluded with a big day's driving.	2,317
1877	Three days' driving, in which 1,323 birds were shot, or an average of 441 birds per diem ... ..	3,828
1878	Three days' driving, 1,323 birds ... ..	2,841
1879	This was a record bad year, due to unfavourable weather in the hatching season and disease. There was no driving, and almost no shooting, even on this first-class estate, as the total denotes. But the figures of later years show that such seasons are very rare, and that a good partridge estate is much more certain to provide sport year by year than a good grouse moor ... ..	332
1880	Year of recovery. This was rapid; in three days' driving 840 birds were killed ... ..	2,486
1881	Three days' driving, 1,190 birds ... ..	3,689
1882	Five days' driving ... ..	3,754
1883	Three days' driving, 1,236 birds ... ..	3,754
1884	Four days' driving gave 2,166 birds. From this date four days becomes the regular number of big partridge drives. Several bad seasons follow in the next ten years, but the average gives an increase on the previous five seasons of 989 birds per season ... ..	5,588
1885	The record season until 1896-97, and still remains so in regard to the total bag. Had the weather been as favourable as in 1896 a very much larger bag would probably have been made, as there is no doubt that it was the best season for birds ever known on the Holkham estate. Four days' driving yielded 3,392 birds. The following are the beats and notes on the weather. December 8th, Branthill, 856 birds, snow and wind; December 9th, Warham, 885 birds; December 10th, Warham, 678 birds; December 11th, Crabb, 973 birds, much snow ... ..	8,100
1886	Four days' driving, 1,516 birds ... ..	3,630
1887	Four days' driving, 2,981 birds. This was another splendid year, followed by a thoroughly bad one ... ..	7,512
1888	No driving, very bad season, but followed by a good one ... ..	1,390
1889	Details not to hand ... ..	5,254
1890	No driving ... ..	2,321
1891	Bad season, no driving ... ..	2,757
1892	Bad season, no driving ... ..	2,734
1893	Four days' driving, 1,631 birds ... ..	4,585
1894	Four days' driving, 2,018 birds ... ..	3,723
1895	Four days' driving, 2,366 birds ... ..	4,970
1896	Four days' driving. This season gave the record bag for the driving at Holkham; the total was 3,439 birds. The four days' bags were:—December 8th, Warham, 1,133 birds; December 9th, Egmore, 771; December 10th, Branthill, 728; December 11th, Wighton, 807. The weather was perfect for driving, except the last day, which was wet in the afternoon. H.R.H. the Duke of York was one of the party in 1896, and showed himself a most quick and brilliant shot ... ..	8,426
The driving for 1897 has been described and illustrated in COUNTRY LIFE. 5,960 birds were killed up to January 16th, 1898.		

Before driving was in vogue at Holkham, Lord Leicester used to walk the birds up in a half-moon; the two outside guns being, perhaps, half the field ahead of the centre guns. This made very pretty shooting; the centre turned the birds over the outside guns and *vice versa*.

As a manager of shooting Lord Leicester has no rival. He knows the habits of the birds and the ground to be beaten so well that if he cannot secure success no one can. Some hedges on the estate birds will never cross, others are on favourite lines of flight. All these he knows, and for weeks before the driving begins he is out with his head keeper, Joyce, and marking out the drives. If, as sometimes happens, the birds break away, he will never be induced to go on to fresh ground, as he justly considers that twenty broken birds are worth 200 unbroken.

C. J. CORNISH.



RACING seasons come and go with astonishing rapidity, and although it does not seem more than a few weeks ago that the curtain was rung down at Manchester, the play began again on Monday last at Lincoln. Many have been the improvements brought about at this meeting during the last few years, and our illustrations of the stands and paddock would scarcely be recognised by the race-goers of twenty years ago. The principal feature of the meeting is, of course, the Lincolnshire Handicap. This is always a very puzzling race to find the winner of, and this year there were, if possible, more horses than ever thought to be certainties by their respective connections. A very early favourite was the well-handicapped Prince Baraldine, and although he was superseded in the betting by others, as the day drew near he was always strongly fancied by the best judges. Ravensdale, on the strength of a marvellous trial with Kilcock, came with a tremendous rattle in the market last week, and started favourite at 11 to 8. If his gallop were correct it was difficult to see how he could possibly be beaten, but home gallops very seldom work out right in public, and this one was no exception to the rule. It is more than probable that Kilcock is not a reliable tell-tale. That he is the best horse in training over his own distance in public everybody knows, but there are many horses who never show their true form on the home downs, without the noise and excitement of a public race-course, and he may be one of these. Before last year's Derby, Galtee More was said to be his master at even weights, which was quite absurd, and this may be the secret of Ravensdale's great trial at home, and his failure to run up to it in public. Prince Baraldine kept his place at 4 to 1, in spite of all the money for the favourite, and Voter, who had beaten St. Cloud in a home gallop, was well backed at 100 to 8. However, the race resulted in Prince Baraldine, High Treasurer, and Ravensdale fighting out an exciting struggle from the distance, and only in the last few strides did the first-named get his head in front, and win by a neck from High Treasurer, with Ravensdale half a length behind.

The Brocklesby Trial Stakes brought out a good field, and was won by Lord Wolverton's Maisie, a three year old, by Minting out of Summer Belle, who beat Mr. Vyner's Chance Medley by a neck, and it was, no doubt, some consolation to the latter gentleman that his representative was beaten by a daughter of his old favourite. That Minting will get something as good as himself before long is very probable. Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, who took the Bathany Stakes on the first day with Gay Lothair, followed this up on the second by winning the Lincoln Stakes with Brightly, a daughter of Bumptious and Sprightly, who defeated Lovetin, the winner of the Tathwell Stakes on the previous day, by a couple of lengths. Another double winner has been the Duke of Devonshire, who took the Trial Stakes on Monday with Neish, a three year old by Ayrshire—Applause II., and the Sudbrooke Selling Plate on Tuesday with Herbal, by Morion—Aromatic. Gay Lothair, who won the Bathany Stakes for Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, is a beautiful little colt, by Lactantius out of Gay Lass, and he won the Brocklesby Stakes last year. His sire is the handsomest horse at the stud, and a well bred one to boot, being by Petrarca out of Koumis, by Macaroni; whilst his dam is by Brag, by Struan (son of Blair Athol) out of Bounce (by Flatterer out of Bittern, by Fisherman), her dam Sprightly, by Hampton out of Lady Golightly, by King Tom. Gay Lothair is, therefore, inbred to Lord Clifden, the best and hardest of all the Newminsters, with two good crosses of Pocohontas, through her sons Stockwell and King Tom, on his dam's side. Suppliant, who finished second to him, occupied the same unenviable position behind Lo Ben last year, and Mr. Mathew Dawson's grand colt Longtown was third. The three best-looking two year olds of the somewhat moderate lot that went to the post for the Tathwell Stakes were the winner, Lovetin, a level black gelding with a lot to like about him, by Friars' Balsam—Betsy Shannon, by Sir Bevy's out of Jenny Howlet; the second, a hard, useful-looking grey colt by Grey Friars—Mermaid; and Marauder, who finished fourth. Sais started favourite, but he failed to stay, and could only secure third place to Lovetin and the Mermaid colt, of whom the first-named won very easily by three lengths.

## BETWEEN THE FLAGS.

LAST week's racing was certainly more remarkable for quantity than quality. The first day of Derby would have been hardly worth noticing except for the style in which Morello, with 12st. 7lb. on his back, cantered away from his seven opponents in the two-mile Derbyshire Handicap Steeplechase. On the second day Flying Hampton showed some useful form over "sticks" by taking the Devonshire Handicap Hurdle Race from Darmstatter, Bach, and five others. He will probably make a useful horse at the game. No heat a moderate field for the Shipley Hall Handicap Steeplechase, but the sport of the two days, taken all round, was decidedly poor, and threw no light on the coming Grand National.

A more miserable affair than the Newmarket meeting, which took place on Friday and Saturday, it would be impossible to imagine. On the first day Chair of Kildare naturally smothered his two moderate opponents in the Town Handicap Steeplechase, for all his 12st. 7lb.; and the useful Canvass Back won the Bury Handicap Hurdle Race almost as easily. This he followed up by taking a Maiden Hurdle Race on the second day, and, as I pointed out in these notes some weeks ago, he will always be worth following over hurdles.

Among the six runners for the Suffolk Cup of two miles and a-half were those two "welshers," Rampion and Regret, but whereas the last-named is quite incorrigible, the well-bred son of Amphion and Rydal had shown that he has no objection to winning these National Hunt Welter Flat Races. I think it is a pity to run Regret on the flat at all, especially as he was beginning to show some signs of amending his ways over hurdles, and the six lengths' licking he received from Rampion will probably undo all the good his jumping seemed to have done him. Seaport II. had no difficulty in giving away plenty of weight all round to the very moderate four that opposed him in the Newmarket Spring Handicap, but his victory had no bearing on the Grand National, and such miserable sport as we saw is not likely to increase the popularity of the Newmarket meetings under National Hunt Rules.

Although none of last week's racing told us anything more than we knew before about this week's big event at Liverpool, there have not been wanting signs that it is gradually dwindling down to a comparative few who will have any chance. Manifesto may not see the post, and will not win if he does, but I have the greatest respect for his stable companion, The Soarer. Cathal I have never fancied, but Grudon is a very like'y candidate to run well. Horizon I know nothing about now, but Ford of Fyne is sure to get the course, and be handy at the finish. Gauntlet I have always thought must have a great chance, though, of course, we have to take his stamina on trust. Barcalwey will be dangerous, though I cannot believe in his quite winning a race of this class, even with 10st. 6lb., and I much prefer Timon with 10st., whom I should think sure to win if only I were certain that all is right with him. I hear great accounts of Kingsworthy, and I think that Bugle will run well, whilst I believe that Gobo is fancied by his connections. In trying to pick the winner of this race it is always best to go only for those of whom we know for certain that they will jump the country and stay to the end. For this reason I must very reluctantly throw over Gauntlet, and stick to The Soarer, Timon, and Ford of Fyne, though Mr. Leyland's horse might beat the lot if he stands up and stays to the end.

## Studs and Stables in Ireland.—II.

**T**O the true lover of thorough-breds, either in their juvenile days, when in training, or after they have relinquished active service on the race-course for the peaceful idleness of the paddock, there can be nothing so interesting as a visit to Ireland. For many years past most of our best jumpers have come from that country, and I ventured to prophesy some few years ago that the day was at hand when all our best flat-races would also be won by Irish-bred horses. That prediction has been more than fulfilled during the last two racing seasons. Indeed, no one can gainsay this fact, namely, that in proportion to their respective numbers, there are far more good horses bred in the "distressful country" than in this.

There may be many reasons for this. The climate no doubt has something to do with it, whilst the limestone soil which is common to so many parts of Ireland grows great fine horses, with substance, bone, and power, but the good constitutions, general hardiness, and wear and tear qualities which are so



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INSPECTING THE CANDIDATES.

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characteristic of Irish horses I attribute, more than anything else, to the rougher and more natural lives spent by young bloodstock on the other side of St. George's Channel. I have been over a great number of stud-farms in Ireland, and I never saw one where foals and yearlings were not out in all weathers, galloping about, keeping themselves clean and healthy, and learning to use their limbs. These sort of youngsters when they go into the trainer's hands are clean and hard, and have almost learnt to gallop, and although they may not look so big and sleek as the fatted yearlings which have fetched long prices at Newmarket and Doncaster, they are naturally much sounder and healthier, and last far longer on the turf than the pampered hothouse products of our English studs. Such horses as Count Schomberg, Clorane, Winkfield's Pride, and many others I could name, are sufficient proof of this.

On arriving in Ireland the first place I go to always is The Curragn, the finest training ground and the healthiest place for horses in all the United Kingdom. Once there my first visit is always paid to the Athgarvan Lodge Stud, which Mr. Pallin has during the last twenty years worked up into one of the best arranged and most successful in the whole country. Having been welcomed by the proprietor with his usual cheery hospitality, the next step is generally to go out and see the stallions.

Mr. Pallin's first horse, and the founder of the Athgarvan Stud, was Favo, by Favonius out of Adrastia, by St. Albans, and when he unfortunately died a year or two ago, it took his owner some time to find a horse likely to suit his Birdcatcher-bred mares as well as his old favourite had done. His choice at last fell upon Wiseman, one of the nicest horses at the stud in Ireland or anywhere else. He may not be quite so big as some people like, but he is all use and quality, action and liberty. This is his pedigree. By Wisdom, a sire who probably owed his great stud success to his almost incestuous inbreeding to the own brothers Stockwell and Rataplan, grandsons of Birdcatcher (Whalebone), out of Sweet Jessie, by Trafford, her dam Damsel, by Teddington (Whalebone). This is rare breeding, and almost sure to suit the Birdcatcher blood of which Mr. Pallin's mares are so full.

A rare good horse was Red Prince II. when poor Harry Linde had him—a better horse than anyone knew, he once told me—and it was not without the

greatest difficulty that Mr. Pallin got the "Farmer" to part with him when there was no longer any hope of his standing another preparation. He is an immensely powerful horse, with the greatest back and loins I ever saw, but with great quality withal, and a rare mover. His blood too is unexceptional—by Kendal, the best bred and most successful sire of the day, and also inbred to Birdcatcher, out of Empress, winner of the Grand National, by Blood Royal, her dam Jeu des Mots, by King Tom. It would be hard to better this blood, especially for the Athgarvan mares.

I am not fond of Hermit horses as a rule, but Touchstone and Birdcatcher blood always nicks well, and Astrologer, by Hermit out of Stella, is a real nice horse himself, so that he is not unlikely to do better where he is than he would have done at most other studs. His dam, too, is full of good hard blood, being by Brother to Trafford out of Giltbert's dam, by Toxophilite out of Maid of Masham, whilst it should not be forgotten that Hermit on Toxophilite, in other words inbreeding to Touchstone, always seems to succeed. He is full of quality and symmetry, long in the shoulders, short in the back, and with the quarters of a dray-horse.

There is no question that those most successful breeders, the Messrs. Graham of Yardley, owed most of their triumphs to Whalebone. It was thus



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A CORNER OF THE PADDOCK.

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that they bred Sterling (sire of Isonomy), who being mated with Cherry Duchess, by The Duke (son of Stockwell), her dam Mirella, by Gemma di Vergy, gave us Energy, Enthusiast, and Heckberry. The latter, who is now one of Mr. Pallin's sires, is a beautiful horse, with great length and quality, and the best of legs and feet. He is rather an excitable horse, like so many of the Sterlings, so that he looks rather light for a stallion, but he is no worse for that, and he sires rare good stock, as he ought to do. He is full of Birdcatcher blood on both sides of his pedigree, and he can hardly fail to be a success where he is.

Master Ned is a big, commanding sort of horse, by Roman Bee out of Gazelle, by Ivan, her dam Antelope, by Mountain Deer, son of Touchstone. He has not yet succeeded in siring race-horses of any great class, though he has done well as a sire of jumpers, for which latter purpose the last horse I saw in the stallion yard is in my opinion the best in the world. There never have been two more successful sires of steeplechasers than Brown Bread and Knight of Kars, whilst the St. Albans family have generally done well over hurdles and fences. Brankholme is by Brown Bread out of Hygeia, by Knight of Kars, her dam Countess Amy, by St. Albans, and therefore own brother to those two good stayers, Hilarious and Reveller. He is a thick, strong, weight-carrying, hunter-like horse, has taken four Queen's Premiums, and is a great sire of hunters. People talk and write a great deal about hunter sires. Here is the sort wanted. He ought to sire a Grand National winner some day.

So much for the stallions, and now you must go and have a look at the mares. Most of the greatest studs have owed their success to some one mare, and Mr. Pallin's is no exception to the rule. In his case it is The Beauty, by Macaroni out of Claret Cup, by Claret, her dam Gramachree, own sister to Birdcatcher, who has founded the Athgarvan Lodge Stud. She is now twenty-eight years old herself, but her blood is well represented by her three daughters, by Ben Battle, Umpire, and Heckberry.

The first of these is Painted Lady, a really nice mare, full of Birdcatcher blood. Umpire's daughter Frolic is also full of good hard blood, and is in foal to Wiseman; whilst the produce of the three year old maiden mare, Eileen Alana, who is by Heckberry, and has visited Wiseman, will have I don't know how many courses of Mr. Pallin's favourite blood.

A great, deep, roomy mare is the chestnut Armlet, by Camballo out of Bracelet, with a very good filly foal of Wiseman's, an own sister to which made 750 guineas. Amiability, by Childeric out of Lady Fair, is a nice sort of mare, and has a thick, strong chestnut filly foal, also by Wiseman. In the same paddock with these two you will also see old Mohican II., by Uncas out of Hetty, whom Mr. Pallin purchased years ago from his brother officer in the 20th Hussars, Captain Oliver Bellasis, for £30. Since then her stock have realised 3,300 guineas—not a bad purchase. She has a very good chestnut filly foal by Broxton, and has this time been mated with Wiseman. She is kept company by Work Girl, a long, low, bloodlike mare, by Galliard out of Darnaway, with a smart filly foal by Favonian. She has visited Astrologer.

The Beauty's dam Claret Cup is represented by another daughter in Nourmahal, by Favo, who has been mated with Red Prince II., and also by

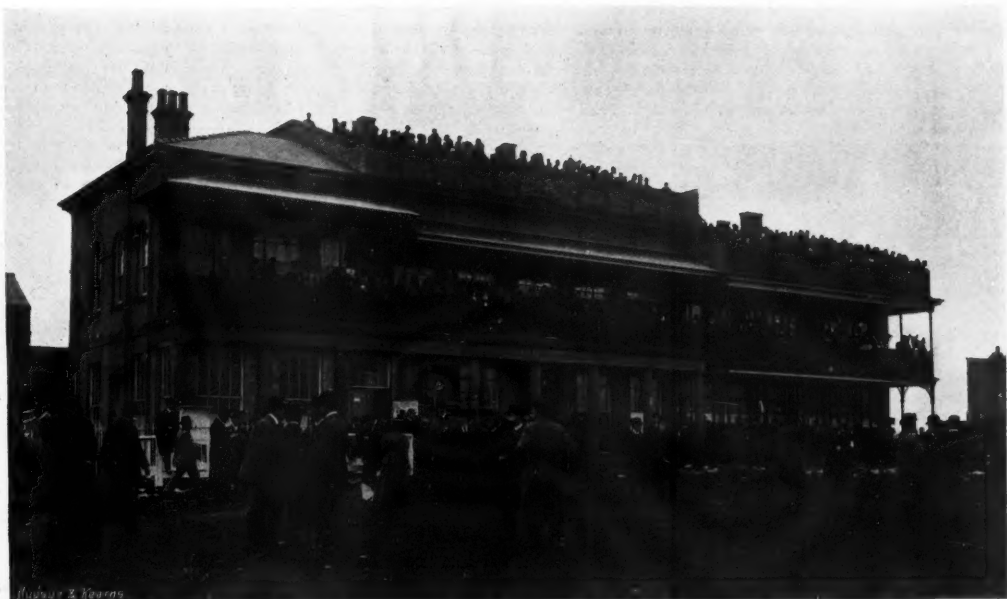


Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

## THE GRAND STAND AT LINCOLN.

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Queen of Beauty, by Ben Battle, and her daughter Kendal Beauty, by Kendal, who has also been mated with Wiseman. This union ought to result in something extra good.

Others going to Wiseman are Maddalena, by Bonavista out of Magdalen, by Hermit, her dam Voga, by Stockwell; and Imalie, by Favo out of Blyskawica, by Thunder, son of Thunderbolt. Those expected to shortly have foals by the same sire are Armaghmartin, by Aughrim out of Lily, by Cramond; Witchcraft II., by Kingcraft out of Traveller's Joy; and Queen's Favour, by Favo out of Berengaria.

You have, of course, by this time asked to be shown the yearlings, and accordingly you are in due course conducted to a large undulating paddock in front of the yearling boxes. A man has been sent on to the top of this, and by the time you have reached the centre, down they all come at full gallop past the place where you are standing. What is that beautiful little brown filly leading the lot? By Jove! what a mover she is, and what a pace she goes—up hill or down it is all the same to her—and how she uses herself all round. That is the filly by Wiseman out of Painted Lady, own sister to Sleeping Beauty, dam of Portmarnock and Rockdove. You will seldom see such a well-balanced yearling as she is, or one with such symmetry, quality, and action. A hard, healthy, deep-hearted young lady, too, with the sweetest and most intelligent head imaginable.

The best show of keeping on terms with this charming filly is made by the compact, short-legged, big-boned chestnut colt by Wiseman out of Work Girl. Very like his sire he is, with rare back and loins, and great broad quarters, whilst he can evidently gallop to some tune. Twice have the yearlings galloped round this field—at least a mile I should say—before they pull up, and wait for us to inspect them. The more you look at the two I have mentioned, the more you like them, whilst there is a lot to like about the big, lengthy, galloping chestnut colt by Wiseman from Queen's Favour. A trifle light of bone for his size some might think him, but a very powerful youngster, a beautiful mover, and almost sure to shape well when he starts his racing career.

The same sire is responsible for a rather small but lengthy, true-shaped bay colt out of Namouna, by Charibert, with rare limbs and shoulders, and a chestnut colt out of Mohican II., a big, leathery, useful sort, with beautiful shoulders, and all liberty, who will gallop when he is tightened up a bit.

Then there is a very big bay colt by Alloway from Armlet, the image of his sire, and likely to grow into just such another horse—time will do a lot for this youngster; and after him you come to two sweet bay fillies, the first by Wiseman out of that celebrated old steeplechase mare Countess, the second by the same sire from Blyskawica. These are both late foals, and so are still rather small, and the daughter of Countess is a first foal, too, but a rare shaped one, and a good mover; whilst her companion is a thick strong sort that looks like making a good yearling by September next.

You must not overlook that nice short-legged, powerfully-built chestnut daughter of Wiseman and Charteress, by Favo. She, too, is a late foal; and all these last three will make more than the average amount of improvement with time.

That all these yearlings are used to being exercised in this fashion is shown by the fact that when they were collected in a certain corner of the paddock, and told to



Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

## RETURNING TO THE BOXES.

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go they at once jumped off, raced twice round as if they thoroughly enjoyed it, then pulled up as if nothing had happened, and stood quite still to be petted and looked at. It is true that yearlings are considered too valuable to be treated like this in England, but this is the way to make them hard and healthy and to teach them to use their limbs, and if I were a trainer, these are

the sort I should like to have sent me to train: colts and fillies that are hard and sound, fit to go into work at once, and that have almost learnt how to gallop. There is not the slightest doubt that the Irish methods of raising blood-stock are much more sensible than ours, and contribute more than a little to the superiority of the Irish-bred race-horses over our own. OUTPOST.

## NOTES FROM A CORNISH GARDEN.

[By LADY ONSLOW.]

IT is the quaintest old garden imaginable, laid out more than a hundred years ago—a somewhat steep terraced slope rising up from the house; this seems to have been a fancy they had long ago in this neighbourhood. I know of more than one old manor house built where the ground rises abruptly from it and is terraced as a garden. Mine has walls on the other three sides, granite steps to ascend the terraces, curious old iron balustrades with chains hanging between, and ancient sundials which the ivy is always trying to smother. THE TERRACE WALLS are full of little ferns, creeping periwinkle, and ivy; but, sad to say, these same picturesque little walls are the residence of hundreds. I might say thousands, of snails, that sally forth at night and work deadly havoc among my favourite plants. I wage constant but somewhat ineffectual war against them. The blizzard year, and some other hard winters that followed, killed many of my best allies—the song thrushes. I am glad to say this year I noticed them once more plentiful about the house. Not only do they charm us with their songs, but make themselves practically useful in killing my enemies the snails; they may be heard tapping their favourite esculents against the granite steps to dispose of the shell and get at the toothsome morsel inside.

This is not the typical Cornwall of the South Coast, where geraniums and fuchsias grow into trees, where palms and dracenas flourish out of doors, but we can boast of fine myrtles and Indian rhododendrons, and are seldom without flowers even



J. H. Beals,

THE TERRACE WALLS.

Camelford.

in midwinter. It is said, and with some truth, of this West Country, that "all the trees are shrubs, and all the shrubs are trees." The salt Atlantic breezes do not encourage the growth of trees, which present a somewhat forlorn appearance except in the shelter of the narrow valleys. There is a tale told of a gardener just arrived to take a situation at a fine estate in North Devon, who wished to resign his place the day after, and when his master inquired the reason, said he "really could not undertake to clip the plantations." "Do not trouble yourself," replied the owner of the plantations, "the sea wind attends to that all right." However, we have compensations in our shrubs—in the myrtle and escallonia hedges, the rhododendrons, camellias, and beautiful hydrangeas. My garden is celebrated for the latter, all colours—pink and blue, and an intermediate shade of pinky-blue. Admiring friends are often anxious to know the cause of the variations in colour. Some people put iron shavings in the soil to turn their hydrangeas blue, which seems to be the favourite colour. I can only say I have nothing to do with it; but, as a rule, the plants in the shade have blue flowers, and where fully exposed to the sun they are pink. A cutting from a blue plant will, if planted in an open place, turn pink—there is absolutely no difference in the species.

I have often wondered what it is that makes gardening such an abiding pleasure. It is partially, I think, the feeling of absolute possession, the sense that these living and growing plants entirely depend on our care and forethought. A very grand garden, kept by a dignified official with a staff of



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RHODODENDRONS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



under-gardeners, could never be the pleasure to its owner that mine is to me, where every plant is a personal friend, and has in many instances a history which increases its value and interest; perhaps was given by a dear friend long since gone over to the great majority; perhaps came from the old home of happy childish memories; perhaps was brought, with much care—and many protests from travelling companions—from some far-away country. I may remark, in passing, that these efforts are seldom worth the trouble; the alien flower, as a rule, does not thrive when thus torn from its own climate and surroundings, and very often you discover afterwards that the seed or young plants can be purchased from a good florist at home. Still, it is difficult, I know, to resist the attempt to annex ever so small a portion of that lavish beauty scattered broadcast over alpine meadow and mountain-side, and I still constantly do it myself, though knowing its futility.

Gardening is essentially a taste of middle age; one does not find it in young people—they are too much taken up with life and its potentialities to appreciate the contemplative leisure with which one enjoys a garden. The taste has spread much during the last thirty years, as the numerous books on gardening issued of late years testify. There occur at once to the mind a dozen or more directly or indirectly dealing with gardening that are of quite recent publication and have a wide circulation. No doubt

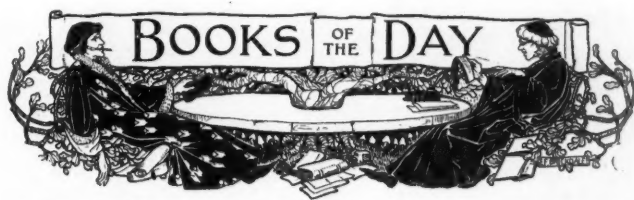


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A GIANT MONKEY PUZZLE.

"C.L."

this is so partly because of the wonderful improvements in flowers by hybridisation and the introduction of many foreign species. A few years ago our dahlias, chrysanthemums, violets, pansies, and a host of others, were insignificant compared with the magnificent blooms we see now. Mr. Robinson, author of the "English Flower Garden," has done much to make popular a taste for gardening among the more cultured classes. His wild garden is, perhaps, the most fascinating branch of the art for those who are the happy possessors of spreading lawns, woodlands, or plantations. Nothing in a flower-bed, regularly laid out and planned, could compare in my mind with what I saw last month in a copse wood—hundreds of snowdrops growing wild, spreading over banks, under trees, right down to the very edge of a little stream, almost nodding their graceful heads into the water. And still more beautiful is a brown March wood in its sombre winter colouring, and, like a miracle, the ground underneath a blaze of golden yellow Lent lilies (daffodils), all the more lovely from the background of dead leaves through which they have sprung, a symbol of resurrection. I have often seen a dead leaf impaled, pierced through by the daffodil bud as it forced its way up. But I am wandering far afield from the old Cornish garden, and must leave unsaid a great deal I am longing to say, only hoping I may have contrived to interest my readers in the pursuit which is to me one of the greatest of my pleasures.



MR. LIONEL DECLE is a French traveller and an able writer, who attracted the attention of the public first by the very precise and outspoken evidence which he was able to give in connection with the murder of Mr. Stokes by Major Lothaire. His new book, "Three Years in Savage Africa" (Methuen), will add to and establish his reputation; for this lucid and modest volume proves Mr. Decle to be at once a great traveller, an intrepid explorer, and a keen observer of men at their most savage stage and in civilised conditions, and of matters well worthy to be observed. Mr. H. M. Stanley is not given to exaggeration, even in describing the exploits of others, and his estimate of the quality of Mr. Decle's achievements may be accepted without reserve or qualification. Travelling by order of the French Government on a scientific expedition, Mr. Decle has made a journey of 7,000 miles. This route, writes Mr. Stanley, "cuts across four different zones of observation; first the South African, with which scores of explorers from Livingstone to Selous have been associated; secondly the Nyasa zone, which gave fame to such men as Livingstone, Kirk, Bishop Mackenzie, and lastly, Sir H. H. Johnston; thirdly the Tanganyika zone, which recalls the names of Burton, Speke, Livingstone and others; and fourthly the Equatorial zone, which reminds us of the exploits of Speke, Grant, Emin Pasha, Mackay, and many a C.M.S. missionary." For the rest, Mr. Stanley's introduction is an admirable review in twenty pages of a pleasantly-written and valuable book of nearly 600 pages. Of what nature is this value? Well, it is primarily ethnological and anthropological, or, since ologies are apt to terrify, let me say that the reader learns a great many interesting facts about the various tribes of black Africans and their manners and customs. Parts of the views expressed by Mr. Decle have already given umbrage to the French authorities, but they are not the parts with which Englishmen will be apt to quarrel. The head and front of Mr. Decle's offending is that he distinctly prefers British rule and administration to any other. Other parts will no doubt rouse keen controversy, for the author is an ardent admirer of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, to whom he dedicates his book "as a tribute of admiration and gratitude to the most creative of statesmen and the most generous of men," and he lays the scourge on to the backs of the missionaries from time to time with an unsparing hand. Also Mr. Decle takes an early opportunity of speaking the plain truth concerning that saintly teetotaller, Khama, by whom apparently the English people have been a good deal taken in. Really Khama seems to be a blundering, undisciplined, domineering fellow, who rules very badly; by no means the Black Solomon we have been told to admire. Finally, the impression which is left on my mind after reading the book is that I have not the least wish to go to Africa, which is a horrid place. Of danger, Mr. Decle says but little, perhaps he thinks little; but it is quite obvious that the discomforts of the business are disgusting. I think it is in the Mahomedan Inferno that the souls of the lost receive boiling and filthy water once in a thousand years. You get it a little oftener on the veldt or in the desert, but it is as hot and dirty as any of the faithful could desire for a Giaour. Heat, cold, drought, rain, flies, fleas, are all present at various times, and always in immoderate excess. "Jiggers" make life a burden; the nigger servants are idle, greedy, untrustworthy; the negro tribes are disgusting, and have every kind of vice; the Boers are surly, avaricious curmudgeons. Clearly there are along this track of 7,000 miles a number of places to be avoided. Mr. Decle deserves our thanks for trying them in his own person and for making it clear that Algiers and Egypt are the only parts of Africa to which the wise white man will go.

"The Kloof Bride, or the Lover's Quest," by Ernest Glanville (Methuen), is simply the fine old crusted blood and thunder novel of the past brought up to date. Miles Venning, a young but adventurous Birmingham gun manufacturer, met his pretty fate at Aber in Carnarvonshire, and then lost sight of her. Later his firm received an order for 20,000 rifles for delivery at Zanzibar signed by the girl's father. Venning was suspicious as to the object for which the rifles were wanted, and wished to see the lady; his partner, true to his kind, cared nothing about the destination of the rifles, but did not object to Venning taking a trip to Zanzibar. There Venning was quite irritatingly simple; his name should have been Simon, not Miles. He let Stoffel, a Boer, trick him out of the rifles; he walked straight into a trap which Stoffel had laid for him, and allowed Abdol, the Arab Chief, to kidnap him at his leisure. So finally, chasing the phantom of the girl all the while, he ran into the middle of a very fine war in which Arabs, various tribes of Zulus, and Boers were ravaging Matabeleland. His adventures were prodigious; let me see—he slashed the Arabs' pet leopard in half with a sword, he was forever being shot at, he escaped from a wonderful island, he knocked an immense number of people down, he was left on a crocodile-haunted island bound to a stake, but escaped by the aid of his faithful Hottentot. Miles, in fact, was one of those men who cannot be killed. Even when, after a three-cornered fight underground between him and Stoffel and several lions, Stoffel blew the whole place up, Miles escaped, and in the end virtue triumphs. I lay down the book with regret that my Dancie Dimont, who can do most things, cannot read. In these muzzling days "Life is full of seriousness for him; he can't get enough of fechtung." "The Kloof Bride" would certainly satisfy him, really the accounts of impis at war are moving.

"The Minister of State," by J. A. Steuart (Heinemann), is a remarkable achievement. It seems to me right to lead off with these words of strong praise because it is necessary to draw attention at the outset to one or two faults, and the reader may well say to himself, "If the book be disfigured in this way, why treat of it at any length?" Therefore I hasten to say that, faults and all, the book is of great power and interest, and that it has exercised upon me such fascination as to compel me to lay aside for a moment quite a little army of other books by no means wanting in interest. Its faults are like the spots on the sun, noteworthy because of the splendid surface on which they lie.

The chief drawback to the novel under the dissecting knife at this moment is that the story of the fortunes of Evan Kinloch is the record of a series of successes which become monotonous. I will not say that I knew he was going to carry all things before him when I encountered him on the second page herding cattle by the banks of Tullyven Burn, but at the moment when bibulous Dominie Proudfoot took Evan in hand, it became clear that "The Admirable" himself was not a circumstance to the character that was going to be developed.

Let me give a rough record of the accomplishments and exploits of Evan Kinloch. He rode bare-backed like a Centaur, he fought many fights and always won, he vanquished a mad bull in single combat, he was badly "savaged" by a vicious horse, he took to learning as a duck takes to water, he won all the prizes at Aberfourie Academy, he got every kind of distinction at Edinburgh University, he went to Balliol, secured a double first and most of the University prizes, he stroked the Oxford boat and won a magnificent race, he went to the Bar. At this point Mr. Stewart seems to have found it necessary to pause for breath. Even a Kailyard hero does not take the solicitors by storm. But, breath once taken, Evan was forced up the ladder of fame at a great pace. Indeed before one could say Jack Robinson, or even Evan Kinloch, he became a Member of Parliament, then the youngest judge on the Bench (in which capacity he had to pass sentence on his patron), and then Home Secretary; and in the exercise of his duty he let his patron out of prison. In two respects only did he fail; that is to say he won, but could not secure, the woman of his heart, and when he tried his hand at a novel he failed to impress the publishers. Still Evan's career was, take it for all in all, too uniformly triumphant not to be tedious. Moreover, there are some minor errors in points of detail. Surely, for example, materials do not exist for an exact comparison between the Senior Wrangler's performances and those of a first-class mathematician at Oxford, and to speak of what "professional sports" said is simply American. But these are small matters.

The supreme excellence of the book is to be found in the descriptions of



Whiteley,

J. A. STEWART.

Bayswater.

rural life in the Highlands, and in the portraiture of the men and women who live that life. I am no culler of nosegays from the Kailyard. There are times when the very sight of the Scottish tongue in print is a weariness to me, when the Caledonian invasion overwhelms me. When, for example, I take up John Galt's novels for quiet relaxation and find them edited by a brilliant Scot *who explains the English's idioms*, I feel that the Anglo-Saxon has been outraged. But Mr. Stewart's Scottish scenes are a revelation; his Scottish types are superb; and his writing is full of quaint humour. He is not a feverish writer of the modern school. He takes time, somewhat after the fashion of Galt, and lets us into all the delicate quaintness of deliciously contrived situations. For example, Evan, the herd-boy, having let the cows stray into the turnips, is pursued by Red Sandy. Now Red Sandy boasted a wooden leg and a crutch, and was at a disadvantage with the light-footed herd; and for five delightful pages the reader quivers in gentle but irrepressible laughter. For the characters, the principal among them are the best and most complete that have been seen since the days of Sir Walter. The pearl of them is Dominie Proudfoot, and the record of an evening spent by him and others at the house of Neil Macgregor is delightful. The whiskey had circulated freely. "At half-past ten the dominie soared out of Neil's ken in a disquisition upon the Nikomachean Ethics, with special reference to the author's remarks on moderation, and a eulogy on the Homeric Gods for their superb scorn of the conventional and the common-place. Neil was getting drowsy, in spite of his admiration, when the dominie came gaily circling down in a Hudibrastic satire on the parish minister's Latinity, and in pure mellowness of soul broke into song." At last Neil gets his guest out into the yard.

"Ye will be stacherin' a wee pittie, dominie," he said softly.

"Aye," returned the dominie, "I haven't got my sea legs yet."

And then, in spite of protests from the dominie that "since Silenus bestrode his ass there has never been such an indignity put upon learning," and while he reflects that "all I'm fit for is to prop a gable end," Neil trundles the dominie home in the cowhouse barrow. His conversation is superb. His references to Solomon as "a gallant gentleman to boot, never a gallanter; took great grief at the thought of any bonnie lassie dying an old maid," are killing; and when he and Neil collapsed in the ditch: "'Hold you, Pitweem,' gasped the dominie, 'I

told you you were owre fou.' Looking up at the reeling stars, Neil asked tartly which was fouest. 'This is no time for feckless questions,' retorted the dominie. 'I'll be obliged to ye to take that dirt out of my mouth; 'tis matter in the wrong place.'" There was never a more charming toper than the dominie; but one is glad that, absorbed in the development of Evan's talents, he became an apostate from the band of cronies who suffered from perennial thirst, and his mother could say "It's like auld times when learning was as a spring sun rich wi' promise of harvest." For the dominie was the kindest-hearted man living, the most brilliant scholar of his generation, and his joy in Evan's triumph was prodigious. But there is no task so hopeless as that of endeavouring to pass to others an idea of the pure and easy enjoyment one gains from reading such a book as this. In the whole there is such freshness and originality of phrase and thought, such abundant humour, and so much of true feeling, that the book may be pronounced charming beyond measure.



THE attainment of full championship honours by RIGHT-AWAY, the tri-colour so successfully shown by Mr. Robert Tait, of Wishaw, will do more to bring this species to the front than breeders imagine. Sable and white Collies have had a good innings, the Lancashire kennels having been pre-eminent for very many years, although Ringleader, when owned by Mr. J. S. Diggle, was considered to be not far removed from first-class form. His colour was, however, against him. Why this was so is hard to imagine, but the fact remains that he was not of the then fashionable tinge, and was therefore frequently passed over by judges who now acknowledge that a tri-colour—black, tan, and white—is quite as handsome as the most perfect sable and white. Mr. C. H. Wheeler, of Birmingham, through whose hands have passed very many of the present-day prize-winners, was one of the first judges to declare, by his awards, partiality for such a dog as Right-away, and following the Scottish animal's triumph at Birmingham at the National Show in December, other judges speedily followed suit. The fact that this dog and his son Barwell Masterpiece, bred by Mr. Tait, but now the property of Mr. J. Powers, have both attained the coveted prefix champion, proves that the stamp of dog looked on as essentially Scottish is regaining popularity lost during what may be termed the Perfection era.

In his day Southport Perfection was a very fine Collie; this fact is indisputable, for his bench record has not been approached by any of his species. Like many a good animal his course seemed to have been run, and even now there is little doubt that



Photo. T. Fall,

FLORENTIUS.

Baker Street.



breeders have become enamoured of the species favoured by so old a fancier as Mr. S. E. Shirley, chairman of the Kennel Club, over a quarter of a century ago. The idea that the black, tan, and white Collie was produced by crossing the Highland Sheepdog with the Gordon Setter is still held in some quarters, although Mr. Rawdon Lee, whose opinion unbiassed critics will sooner take than that of anyone else, always avers that the exact opposite was the case, the Setter having had his coat and sensibility improved by being crossed with the Sheepdog. Mr. W. W. Thomson, another authority one must respect, is also of opinion that the tri-colour was the original variety long before the more showy sable came into notoriety. As marking an epoch in the history of the breed, these facts are certainly worth mentioning, and the accompanying photo of the premier specimen of the variety now before the public can scarcely fail to be of interest to the largely-increasing number of admirers of the very handsome tri-coloured Collie. The successes of specimens of this variety form the feature of the season. The allegiance of the small band of Dandie Dinmont breeders this side the Border has met with its just reward, and it is very questionable if in recent years better specimens of the variety so familiar to all students of



PIPER AND BOGIE.

Sir Walter Scott have been benched at English shows than has been the case during the last few months. South Country exhibitors have largely increased in number, and the success of such staunch upholders of the best characteristics of the variety

as Mrs. Kate Spencer, Mrs. Peel Hewitt, Mr. H. J. Bryant, Mr. T. B. Potterton, and others has been most encouraging, and will, no doubt, be the means of the game little terrier becoming a greater favourite as a show variety. In his annual retrospect in the *Kennel Gazette* Mr. H. J. Bidwell, a gentleman well qualified to write on the subject, declares that there is a comparative lull in Dandie matters, accounted for by the fact of disinclination on the part of the general public to purchase and keep Dandies as pets. The reason of this is not far to seek. He is a very affectionate, and consequently a very jealous dog. He must be your only friend, or no friend at all, and when kept in mixed company he is very prone to "fight for it," and is not particular as to the size of his adversary. The Scottish part of him contains a disposition for a blood feud, and his teeth are such as would not disgrace an English Bulldog; the result is fatal combat. Many breeders, particularly of the "one dog" order, would take this trait of the Dandie as an additional inducement to keep one; he is, in fact, essentially a country dog, and a splendid companion.

It is, however, as a show dog that the Dandie is now being dealt with, and in this capacity the kennel of Mrs. Lloyd Rayner, of Graythwaite Old Hall, charmingly situated in the Lake District, is pre-eminent. This lady has met with singular success since taking up Dandies, and in BLACKET HOUSE YET AND ANCRUM FANNY possesses the best brace in the country. Jock and Fluffie, as they are called at home, have won the highest honours in the best company, and, as proved by the appearance of the puppies, MARCH HOUSE PIPER AND MARCH HOUSE BOGIE—named after Mrs. Lloyd Rayner's house in Sefton Park, Liverpool—the former, their sire, possesses the power of reproducing his best qualities in his progeny. Mrs. Rayner is staunchly opposed to trimming or faking even in a minor degree, all her Dandies being shown as Nature made them, and at Cheltenham, a few weeks since, there were no more perfect animals benched than the representatives of the Graythwaite kennel. In lovely condition, they made quite a picture, and the victory of Blacket House Yet over Mr. T. B. Potterton's Puff, certainly one of the best mustards of the day, as was proved by his Birmingham win, was a great triumph for the older dog. Young stock claiming Yet as sire are also coming to the front, and there is not much doubt that when his show career is over his memory will be kept green by his progeny. With his kennel mate he has been a very distinguished exhibit at all the leading shows for the last two years, prizes having been



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

RIGHTAWAY.

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Photo. by T. Fall,

BLACK DRAKE.

Baker Street.

gained by them at, among other high-class fixtures, Manchester, the Crystal Palace, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Amsterdam, Cruft's, Chelmsford, Birkenhead, and Liverpool. They are described by their owner as "little ruffians," a very apt appellation, as their excellent photograph proves.

It would be a matter of more than ordinary difficulty to find a handsomer wavy-coated Retriever than BLACK DRAKE, the property of Mr. Harding Cox, whose revived interest in



YET AND FANNY.

show dogs has created such general satisfaction in all ranks of the fancy. An all-round sportsman, and possessing intimate knowledge of most varieties, Mr. Harding Cox is now an interested visitor to all our large shows, and, unlike many owners, he invariably handles his own dogs. There is more in this than catches the eye, for it is a fact brooking no denial that an animal will always show himself to the best advantage when handled by his owner or a kennel man associated with his daily routine. A sporting dog will always obey the behest of the man who can show him sport, and, as all Mr. Harding Cox's dogs are kept for use rather than for ornament, no one is better qualified to handle them in the ring than their owner. One can imagine from the lovely photo of Black Drake that his master is not very far away. He is a fine worker, and is a grandson of Champion Darenth, certainly the most perfect Retriever ever benched. His show record is a good one, although by some judges he is considered deficient in quality. In body, coat, expression, and general type he is, however, quite in the front rank, and it is worthy of note that since being placed at public

service he has sired the puppy of the year. This is Wimpole Peter, a young dog not yet twelve months old, sold for 100 guineas at public auction. The appearance of this puppy was one of the sensations at Cruft's Show, there being several claimants for him at catalogue price—30 guineas. According to the rules of the show he had consequently to be submitted to public competition, with the result that he was knocked down to Mr. H. R. Cooke, of Nantwich, at the price named—a very high compliment to the sire, Black Drake. Should the proposed field trials of the newly-formed Flat-coated Retriever Club be brought to a successful issue, there is but little doubt that Mr. Harding Cox's dogs will be prominent competitors, for all are thoroughly broken to their natural work.

The Rev. A. Wellesley Greeves, of Whiston Vicarage, Cheadle, Staffs, forwards some interesting particulars of his grand young St. Bernard FLORENTIUS, a son of Prince of Florence, and, since his win at the Crystal Palace last autumn, looked on as one of the most promising smooths now on the bench. His show career was started when but eight months old, and, after successful visits to Leek, Crewe, Ilkeston, Radcliffe, and Macclesfield, he flew at higher game, and, with his litter sister Flordelice, scored notable wins at England's premier show. Before he was a year old he had, in fact, won twenty prizes, including fourteen firsts and specials. He is not only one of the giants of the day, but he is built on the grandest of lines, has marvellous bone, a tremendous head, and very great depth of foreface. For lip and muzzle he is without equal: whilst in colour he is the richest orange, with dense black shadings and perfect white markings. For the guidance of breeders who may have to make selections from large litters, the following table showing the gradual growth of this young dog for the first year of his existence is given. It is, we admit, full of interest:—

AGE.	3 dys.	WEEKS.						MONTHS.											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Weight: lbs.	2½	2½	4½	7½	9½	13½	17½	51	73	93	120	134	134½	148	158	171½	179		
Hgt. at Shldr., inches								20½	23½	25½	28	29½	30½	31½	32½	32½	33		
Girth of Head								17½	20½	22	23½	25	26	27	28	28	28½		
Do. Muzzle								10½	12½	13	14½	15½	16	17½	17½	18	18		
Do. Chest								27½	31½	32½	36½	39	39	39½	39½	42	43		

Mr. Greeves is a great believer in mixed diet, although some of his young dogs have from 8lb. to 9lb. of flesh a day. The daily diet of Florentius is, for instance, 6lb. of flesh, six biscuits, and a quart of milk, with an occasional egg. As exercise he covers from four to six miles daily in very hilly country, and now and then he has a lengthened spin of a dozen miles. His kennel is a commodious one, and to it is attached a covered run, with a boarded floor well off the ground. Florentius has never been washed, and his beautiful condition is accounted for by scrupulous cleanliness and diligent grooming. Would that more breeders thus followed Nature's laws! BIRKDALE.



GRAVEL FOR CARRIAGE DRIVE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enjoy the rather doubtful blessing of living in a part of the country where what is called "Croydon gravel" is virtually the only decent material for carriage drives that can be obtained within reasonable distance. The name of the gravel indicates sufficiently the part of England that I live in, and my purpose in writing to you is to ask whether you or any of your readers can tell me of any better material for drives that I can obtain at something like the same price. The trouble is that Croydon gravel consists of two kinds—coarse and fine. Now the coarse is too coarse—great flints that take all the point off the wheel felloes of light carriages and badly scratch the wood—and the fine is too fine to be really useful for carriage drives, and is valuable only for paths. Such at least is my experience. A good deal depends on the foundation you lay it on. If the dealers would sell a medium quality, screened less finely than the fine, it would meet one's wants. Until they do so, could the kindness of yourself or a reader suggest me a tolerable alternative?—E. F. L.

#### THE OMNIVOROUS RABBIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see that in your "Country Notes" you refer a correspondent, who has asked for a list of plants and shrubs that rabbits will not eat, to Sir Herbert Maxwell's charming book "Memories of the Month." Now, with all respect to Sir Herbert Maxwell, and with all gratitude for the many delightful hours I have occupied in reading his various writings on country matters, I would say that his list is not a ubiquitously safe guide. Rabbits are curious creatures, and I have not the slightest doubt that they alter their habits in different circumstances

of place and climate. For instance, it is well known that in some places they will bolt from ferrets much more freely than in others. Similarly, though Sir Herbert Maxwell's list is no doubt perfectly accurate with regard to the locality—probably the Lowlands of Scotland—in which his very faithful observation has chiefly studied the gastronomic tastes of rabbits, I can assure him that in another part of the country—a certain country of the marches between England and Wales—with which I happen to be familiar some exceptions must be made from his list before it can safely be taken as a guide. The exceptions that I have noted—of plants on his list which rabbits will, under stress of weather and scarcity of food, attack—are, among shrubs, some of the azaleas, honeysuckle, some kinds of lilac, St. John's wort, guelder rose, and roses; and among herbs, daffodils and lungwort. For the rest, so far as I have had an opportunity of verifying it, his list is beyond reproach; and I have not the least doubt that even these exceptions that I have named are only attractive to rabbits when more pleasant food fails them. I have only been at what I feel to be rather the discourtesy of mentioning these exceptions in order to save your correspondent from possible disappointment arising out of too absolute a reliance on a list which I think cannot be laid down as a hard and fast one, applicable to all the various conditions that prevail in different parts of our little island.—A COUNTRYMAN.

#### CRUFT'S DOG SHOW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the review of Cruft's Dog Show in your paper of the 19th ult., I notice your remarks about restricting the specials, and, as far as I can make out, what you mean is that the specials should be open to all. If that is so, it would be very unfair indeed to his subscribers, as those who had not given a penny towards buying the specials would be open to win them, and I, as a subscriber to Cruft's, should object. I should like to know what club gives specials open to all. Of course, once in a while one is given open to all, but mostly by private people, or if it is given by a club, it is a "sprat to catch a whale," as the club hopes that one who may win it will join the club. I have looked through the catalogues of numbers of dog shows, and find in all cases the specials are for members of a said club; in fact, it could hardly be otherwise, as, if Cruft or any dog club gave specials open to all, I wonder who would pay to join the club if they could win specials without doing so; and then, where would the money come from to buy the specials? To say specials should be open to all is quite a



dream, unless the writer of the said article feels inclined to buy the specials himself, and then we should be pleased to win them. I have had to do with a good lot of clubs, but I never before heard of a club special being open to all, and it certainly never would work. I never before heard the remark that you say Mr. Cruft made, viz., specials were given with the object of "advertising," but if he did so, he was certainly quite right in his remarks, as they are given by clubs to advertise the clubs, and to try and get others to join, and I certainly see no harm in it, as the clubs must get members to join before they can pay for and give good specials. The only specials that I see that are not a kind of advertisement are those given by private people for love of the breed of dog they fancy. I feel sure that was your idea carried out, and if specials at Cruft's (and why Cruft's only?) were open to all, the show would soon not be open to all, as Mr. Cruft would have to pay out of his own pocket for them, as certainly his subscribers would not do so on those terms. P.S.—I may say, although a subscriber to Cruft's, I never saw him.—A SUBSCRIBER.

[Cruft's Show is a private speculation, and the promoter has, of course, a perfect right to make what restrictions he thinks fit. That all the specials are purchased by him is, however, quite an erroneous idea. The Countess of Warwick and Lady Arthur Grosvenor are, among others, donors of cups put up for competition among his subscribers. No comparison can be drawn between the show and one supported by specialist clubs. Surely all breeders do not join these combinations with the sole object of being able to compete for the club specials. The Association of Bloodhound Breeders may be mentioned as a club offering special prizes for general competition. The following extract from the official report of the meeting of the committee of the Kennel Club held April 13th, 1897, justifies the remarks of "Birkdale" in what he said on the unfairness of Cruft's restrictions:—"In answer to a remark that in some cases it was particularly specified that certain special prizes were only open to subscribers, Mr. Cruft admitted this was so, and in reply to questions, said he did not advise donors of specials of the restrictions. He was, however, legally advised that sending each of them a schedule was a sufficient notice. It was pointed out to Mr. Cruft that people would cease to give special prizes to shows if they were treated in such a manner. Mr. Cruft replied that he considered the donors of special prizes gave them as an advertisement, and were very pleased to have them accepted and inserted in the schedule. To this statement there were strong murmurs of dissent on the part of the committee."—ED.]

#### A PRETTY PARASITE—LATHRÆA CLANDESTINA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have not yet seen in your interesting publication a note concerning that pretty parasite, *Lathræa clandestina*, which attaches itself to the roots of some trees, in my case the willow being the unwilling host. In the spring months a mass of purple flowers appears above the ground, the flowers being of very distinct form, the upper portion shaped like a cowl protecting the stamens. My specimen is growing in a moist place by a streamside margin and increases every year. It comes to us from the South of Europe.—WOODLANDER.

[Many thanks for your note regarding this very curious parasite. It is attractive enough to encourage in the garden, and many fine examples of it exist. One of the most luxuriant known to us is in the Botanic Garden at Cambridge, and Mr. Lynch, the well-known Curator there, is proud of it.—ED.]



THERE are many beautiful families of hardy flowering shrubs, but few of greater charm than the so-called Syringas or Mock Oranges. *Syringa* is a misnomer, this being the botanical name of the Lilacs, and has nothing whatever in common with the Mock Orange, so named from the delicious orange blossom-like perfume of the bold white flowers. This fragrance in some forms is almost overpowering, and one may readily detect a bush in full bloom without seeing it. The most common species is *P. coronarius*, which is represented in almost every English garden, not always planted, however, in the best way. We have yet to learn that a shrubbery is not the best place to plant the many precious hardy shrubs, precious for their beauty of form and flowers. A Mock Orange crowded up amongst a medley of other things will live, certainly—it is too vigorous to collapse without a fierce struggle for existence—but will never, of course, under such conditions reveal its true beauty. The Mock Orange will live in almost all kinds of soils and situations, especially the stronger-growing kinds, of which *P. grandiflorus* is the best example. There is a great resemblance between the various species as regards their flowers, but some are scentless. *P. Gordonianus*, *P. inodorus*, and the beautiful late-flowering *P. grandiflorus*, have a very faint perfume. The last-named has, as its name suggests, very large flowers, these individually measuring about two inches across, and white. *P. grandiflorus* is one of the gems of its race. Always select this late summer flowering shrub, so free, robust, and handsome. Many Mock Oranges will be found in nurseries under various names, not a few synonymous, and therefore they must be selected with care.

#### THE SMALLER MOCK ORANGES

are delightful little shrubs. *P. microphyllus* is worth planting in a bed by itself on the outskirts of the lawn where its graceful shoots are unfettered by neighbouring shrubs, stronger perhaps than itself. This Mexican species is scarcely so hardy as the other kinds we have mentioned, but is seldom killed in winter. A rather more sheltered position and warmer soil are desirable to get the most luxuriant growth. In the summer months its slender shoots are white with blossom. *P. Lemoinei* is a hybrid kind, and very charming also, being free, dwarf, and in every way a good garden shrub. We do not care greatly for variegated shrubs, but the variegated form of *P. coronarius* called *foliis aureis* is attractive in the early summer, when its leaves change to rich golden yellow. Never plant such a striking shrub as this too freely, and always, if possible, with the purple-leaved Cherry (*Prunus Pissardi*) as a foil.

#### ANNUAL FLOWERS.

We must urge those who wish to make free use of annual flowers in the garden during the coming summer to send in their orders. Many mistakes occur in their cultivation, and one is late sowing. It is unwise, however, to begin too



C. Metcalfe. THE MOCK ORANGE (*Philadelphus grandiflorus*).

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early, as the seed seldom germinates well, often rotting if the soil is cold and wet. Never sow too thickly. Every seedling must have sufficient space to develop its true character if one desires a bountiful display of flowers.

#### A FEW GOOD ANNUAL FLOWERS.

There are so many annual flowers that to give a list would prove wearisome. A good catalogue from some high-class nurseryman is helpful, and so is our "Answers to Correspondents" column, as there individual requirements are considered. China Asters give varied colour and form, whilst the pure white *Antirrhinum* is effective as a contrast to bright flowers. We enjoy a mass of the white flower, which continues attractive more or less until the time of frosts. *Bartonia aurea* is pleasing for its orange colour, and groups of *Coreopsis atrosanguinea* and *C. Drummondii* possess striking beauty, and the flowers are useful to gather for the house. *Callirhoe involucrata*, deep purple, the Candytufts, and the Cornflowers are indispensable. The blue Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*) should never be omitted. Its flowers are as blue as the summer sky, and useful in many forms of indoor decorations. This blue variety is preferable to any of the other forms—so-called white, pink, and allied shades. *Godeitia The Bride* is a very pure white flower, and to the list may be added *Petunias*, *Stocks*, *Shirley* and other *Poppies*, *Scarlet Zinnias*, *Phlox Drummondii*, and both French and African *Marigolds* may be included; but many useful kinds other than these will be found in a trustworthy list.

#### THE BORDER AURICULAS.

By the time these lines are in print the Auriculas in many an English garden will be bursting into flower. The writer draws attention to them at this season because far too little is made of a sweet-scented and richly-coloured race, that deserve a larger share of our affections than they enjoy at present. Few plants are so easily grown from seed sown as soon as ripe in the late summer, or by division of strong roots in spring—the correct mode of increase when a certain kind is to be perpetuated. For garden edgings or massing in beds the colours must be decided. Washed-out yellows, dirty whites, and ineffective tones are valueless, and it is only by a process of selection that richly-coloured varieties are obtained. Ruby red, deep plum, lilac, or similar colours, the flowers carried in bold trusses and standing well up, are the varieties desired.

#### EARLY IRISES.

We were pleased to see a small group of early Irises at a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society. The species shown comprised *I. reticulata*, of which we have recently written in COUNTRY LIFE, *I. alata* or the Scorpion Iris, *I. persica*, and the charming *I. orchoides*. All these make exquisite pot plants, and we have ourselves enjoyed keenly the fresh and dainty flowers in the early year. A cool greenhouse is sufficient for their culture. The Scorpion Iris varies greatly in its shades of blue. *I. persica* is a jewel of its race, very dwarf, with white flowers touched with palest blue, relieved by velvety purple blotches. *I. orchoides* is rare, but such a gloriously coloured flower should not remain scarce. It blossoms freely in a pot and is robust in growth. All these Irises will succeed in a warm sheltered spot on the border or rock garden, but under glass their flowers are unharmed by wind, rain, or frost.



MONDAY: Essie is a woman of one idea, and that is her party. When I am meditating on such important matters as spring hats she interrupts me with such unanswerable questions as "How many plovers' eggs do you think each person can eat?" Who can say? Not I; for I can comfortably dispose of half a dozen at any moment. And when she sees how occupied I am with clothes, she says unkind things of the weather, and reminds me pointedly of the blue noses and red cheeks of the women at Sandown who would wear their new spring frocks in spite of the cold that prevailed.

"At least," she says to me impressively, "do not fall into the vulgar error of putting on the last cry of spring fashions with the shriek of the wintry wind whistling round your doorposts." This is a very poetic way of putting it—I never suspected Essie of such inclination. And she is only thus prompted because her sealskin is quite new this year, and she has a black jet toque equally suited to summer or winter, so she sets herself

up on a pedestal of superiority and exhorts other women to control their desire for new frocks. Positively, I hate to go out of doors, my sealskin has assumed so ruddy an appearance, and my black skirt is brown with the dust of ages. I have quite made up my mind that an ideal spring costume would be a small-checked skirt and a plain cloth coat with a shirt of soft satin or soft piqué, and the tie varied to suit the complexion of the wearer. This should be adopted unanimously. All the wise women who are short are sure to take unto themselves the latest order of French millinery, which turns up off the face, and thereby gives height unto its wearer. Those who are tall may and should take advantage of the hats of soup-plate figure, with a broad brim just pointing up a little in the front, with the back lifted to disclose scarves of lace-trimmed chiffon doing duty for cache-peignes, the sole trimming being a huge bunch of flowers in the front.

There is really much change in fashion this year. The little short sac coats of last year look quite dowdy. Tight and trim set the new jackets to our waists, with short basques boasting but little fullness. The sleeves are not quite tight at the top, but yet they show no inclination to be large. Most of the jackets are cut and trimmed so that they can either be worn open or fastened over at one side.

WEDNESDAY: At last the momentous night arrived, and Essie's party, from being much expected, became an established fact; a very merry fact it was too. All sorts of distinguished persons did distinguished things, and those who were not otherwise distinguished were distinguished by their frocks. And there were not enough women to go round, and men grew as plentifully as blackberries, and agreed with me even better. We did not get home till four o'clock this morning, when we left Essie still standing at the foot of the stairs, saying with her best smile, "Oh! you are not going yet, are you?" The powers of endurance of Essie as hostess are marvellous. I caught a glimpse of



LIGHT BLUE HAT WITH WHITE CHIFFON.

her having her fourth supper as the carriage was announced. I went home to think carefully over the best details of the best frocks, and to realise that the one which deserved the place of honour was undoubtedly worn by an American—a pretty little woman she was, too, with a wonderful bow of diamonds in her hair, in Louis XVI. pattern, by no means exaggerated in size but excessively effective, in front of a small scarf of fuchsia-coloured chiffon twisted in the coils of her dark hair. Her gown was of mauve chiffon, elaborately tucked, both skirt and bodice, and decked with insertions of the finest point d'aguille lace, interspersed with tiny silver sequins. It had a large bunch of red roses in the centre, and a sash of red chiffon dotted with silver paillettes and lace-trimmed ends. Her only serious competitor in the field of my favour was a woman wearing white satin, with designs of black lace let in all over it transparently to show a lining of pink silk; round her shoulders was draped a fichu of fine muslin edged with lace caught at one side with a bunch of yellow and pink roses, with a long trail of ivy leaves and buds hanging to the knees. The hair of this elegant person was decorated at the back with a high diamond comb, and about an inch above the left ear was a group of tiny pink and yellow rose-buds, the hair being parted slightly at one side.

Nellie had her bridal dress done up, and thought I did not recognise it. It looked remarkably well covered with black net, traced with jet bugles, an appliqué of white lace, and small round steel beads. The bodice and skirt showed this alike, while the berthe and small sleeves were fashioned of white tulle striped with lines of bouillonné, and a white tulle sash with bouillonnés on the ends put the finishing touch to a frock as useful as elegant. Of course, I at once asked Nellie what she had done with her train, and she confided in me that it was to serve as a lining for a high bodice, and would also do duty cleaned as a plain skirt, with which she proposed to wear a bodice entirely made of real lace, traced with small designs in pink ribbon to simulate roses. This ribbon embroidery is beautiful when applied on to lace. It is exceedingly expensive though, and herein may be found an occupation for the idle woman of taste. Certainly Essie's was a nice party, and the sooner she gives another the better.

THURSDAY: I am still very tired; I have not got over the effects of that party, and every member of the family has been in during the day to discuss its charms. We all see entertainments from a different point of view, and three of the girls I have met this afternoon never noticed how beautiful I looked. I shall have to chronicle it—my dress—myself, else shall I never go down to posterity. It was pale blue crêpe de chine, fringed, draped, and dragged round my figure to tie into a bow with long ends, also fringed, and my hair was very much glorified by a twist of pale blue tulle and a small bunch of violets. Essie says violets are out of fashion, but they are so becoming I cannot resist their charms. I had a large bunch of them at the top of my gown, and a wreath of them hanging all down one side, with single blossoms carelessly strewn about the hem as if they had dropped there.



BLACK CASHMERE DRESS TRIMMED WITH VELVET RIBBON.